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disques

NOVEMBER
1931

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disques

FOR NOVEMBER 1931

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disques

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VOL. II

NOVEMBER, 1931

No. 9

SOME years ago, when electrical recording was just getting on its feet, the mere announcement of an album containing a complete symphony, concerto, opera or piece of chamber music was more than enough to throw the whole phonograph world into a fever of pleasurable excitement. The mere announcement? Much less than that, in fact. Just a vague rumor that such and such a symphony was to be recorded, or even *might* be recorded, by this or that orchestra was abundantly sufficient to cause impatient collectors sleepless nights, painfully tossing in their beds as they wrestled with the vexatious problem of just how the necessary cash was to be raised so that they could purchase the potential album when and if it appeared. But times change. More and more recordings were issued, until the various catalogues fairly bulged with desirable things. Collectors became, if not actually surfeited, at least comfortably full. The release of albums that a few years back would have profoundly stirred record buyers now only caused a mild ripple of interest. A sort of lull, agreeable but not exciting, ensued, broken only now and then by the protests of collectors indignant about excessive prices, the short life of records, the nuisance of having to change

record sides every few minutes, irritating surface noise, and the blindness of those whose privilege it is to decide just what is to be recorded. There was, of course, plenty in the supplements to sustain the collector's interest, but the first glow and wild pleasure of unexpected and thrilling discoveries had disappeared — perhaps, alas, forever. The fact that a machine, and not too slightly a one at that, could give a fairly realistic approximation of a large symphony orchestra was no longer so surprising; it was taken more or less as a matter of course. The collector today does not so quickly and impulsively lose his head; accustomed to good reproduction, he tends to be more critical and difficult to satisfy; it takes more than an attractive album to throw him off his balance. Which may account in part for the widely lamented slump in the record business.



The events of the next month or so, however, promise to inject new life into the industry, prod the collector's dormant interest, and put the phonograph once more in the spotlight, where it properly belongs. It has been a long time since so much that is interesting and important to the record collector has happened, or is about to happen. After the lull of

the past Spring and Summer, this Fall promises to be a memorable one in the history of the phonograph, marking one of its most significant strides forward. First and foremost, of course, there is the remarkable new long-playing record, ecstatically announced in last month's *Disques*. Then there are the new chromium needles, which seem to fill satisfactorily the need for a needle that will play a great number of records without attention. And last, but surely not least, there are the new record releases. Seldom have so many fine recordings appeared all at one time. With Columbia issuing Strawinsky's recent *Symphonie de Psaumes* (reviewed in the last issue), Brunswick releasing on one list superb recordings of the Prelude and Liebestod from *Tristan* and Franck's Symphony in D Minor, and Victor, in addition to its regular end-of-the-month releases, putting out a vast number of foreign repressings the latter part of November—with such a variety of records to beguile the collector's eye and sooth his ear, it can scarcely be claimed that interest in the phonograph in America is rapidly evaporating. It has been a long time, indeed, since it seemed so thoroughly alive and kicking.



Last month, announcing the long-playing record in this place, we stated that it would be available about October 1. That was somewhat optimistic, as several readers, disgruntled at having paid numerous visits to their dealers in a fruitless quest of the new discs, have kindly pointed out. Various unavoidable delays occurred, so that the date given in the announcement proved to be a bit premature. As a matter of fact, the new machines and records, though expected every day, had not reached the dealers' shops when this issue of *Disques* went to press.



The new records make a striking appearance. The labels on the higher-priced discs are silver, those on the lower-priced gold. The attractive envelopes in which the records are enclosed are black and gold, and they are made of more substantial material than that used in the envelopes for the standard discs. In several cases the labels, in addition to the usual information, state where the recording was done. This is an excellent idea, and it is to be hoped that it will be continued. It would also be a good plan to include the date of the recording; such information has an obvious value, and in later years, particularly, it may be very useful. On the other hand, it is to be regretted that on the discs containing the Beethoven Fourth and Fifth Symphonies, the Haydn *Glock* Symphony and the Chopin Sonata no indication is given as to how the movements are distributed. There is, moreover, plenty of room for this necessary information. But these, after all, are small matters at the moment, and no doubt later on they will be satisfactorily adjusted. At the present the most important matter is the quality of reproduction obtained from the program transcriptions. In the review columns of this issue some of the new discs are considered. (Next month the balance of the list will be reviewed.) Unfortunately, they were reviewed under rather difficult conditions; the instruments equipped to play the long-playing records were not available, nor were the chromium-orange needles, so that a makeshift machine had to be rigged up and needles not meant for long-playing used. Necessarily allowances had to be made here and there for certain inevitable shortcomings which presumably will not be apparent when the discs are played on the new instruments.

It has become an annual custom of the RCA Victor Company to release in the Fall a number of repressings from its foreign affiliations' catalogues. This year's list, available about November 20, surpasses in quantity and quality those of previous years. It was our original intention to review these discs in the present issue; but as the December *Disques* will be out only a few days after the records are released, it has been decided to hold the reviews until next month, when they will be more timely.



Every once in a while a new needle, purporting to give amazing results—*i.e.*, bring out instruments hitherto inaudible, produce a quality of tone equal to the original, renew the life of discs visibly and audibly ready for the ash can, eliminate all signs of surface noise, and actually add to the life of records instead of wearing them out—every now and then such a marvel is announced. The good news spreads rapidly, and there is a great commotion while the new needle is given a trial. After patiences have been exhausted and imaginations sufficiently strained, collectors quietly return to their old standbys, and things are again serene until another new needle appears. The new RCA Victor chromium needles (we refer to those intended for the standard records; with those designed for the long-playing records, of course, we are not as yet familiar), while performing none of the feats mentioned above, nonetheless give eminently satisfactory results and should be very popular with owners of electrical machines. So far as can be judged at the moment, their salient virtue is that of convenience. The quality of tone is excellent, equal to that obtained by any other needle we have tried; the volume, about the same as that produced by the full-tone steel needle, is ample; and the surface noise, though still present, is not objectionable and indeed is less than that caused by most needles. The manufacturers claim that, with the proper care, the chromium needles can be played from seventy-five to one-hundred times. Not excelling at mathematics, we have not tried to verify that claim. We

(Continued on page 394)

SUBSCRIPTIONS, INDEX AND BOUND VOLUMES

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CODE

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer and all records are domestic releases unless the word **IMPORTED** appears directly under the number: B-Brunswick, C-Columbia, CH-Christschall, D-Decca, EB-Edison-Bell, FO-Fonotipia, G-National Gramophonic Society, HO-Homocord, O-Odeon, PA-Parlophon, PD-Polydor, R-Regal (English), and V-Victor.

Negro Spirituals

By R. EMMET KENNEDY



In studying the spiritual songs of the American Negro it is well not to lose sight of the fact that the white man's religion was responsible for their evolution and development. At a very early date after his introduction into this country the Negro began to put aside his superstitious belief in his African charms and fetishes, and the teachings of Christianity took a strong hold on his pliable imagination. While he never completely relinquished his faith in sorcery and witchcraft or his belief in the protective powers of his native idols, the diluted religion he evolved for himself became the means of changing his whole emotional expression. Taking into consideration the epidemics of fanatical revival meetings which visited the South, from the time of Jonathan Edwards to the early part of the nineteenth century, it is easy to see how the Negro's hysterical visionary temperament succumbed so readily to the white man's religion with its Old Testament pageantry and impressive phantasmagoria as preached by the Wesleyan revivalists. Likewise the loud rejoicing and lusty congregational singing indulged in at these meetings acted as a vitalizing stimulant upon his music-loving nature. Regardless of whether he took active part in the exciting demonstrations or only witnessed them from a distance, the influence is unmistakable. Becoming familiar with the

camp-meeting hymns heard again and again, the Negroes began singing them after their own fashion with certain rhythmic, melodic and textual changes, and before long the characteristic African syncopation had so altered them that the "white" models were lost sight of and the songs were looked upon as original Negro productions. Some of the early hymnals and "revival songsters" printed between 1800 and 1860 show conclusively the source of inspiration; but as time went on the spirituals took on a character all their own and have come to represent the genuine religious feeling and artistic expression of these musically endowed people.

It is interesting to note that although the Negroes were making their soulful "ballets" and spirituals from an early date and could lay claim to an important place among the singing people of our country, the generally accepted musical expressions of their hopes and longings, joys and sorrows, were the minstrel travesties which took so firm a hold on the American imagination in the thirties, and the Foster plantation melodies so popular in the fifties and the early sixties. It was only after the Civil War that the actual songs of the Negroes became known to the general public and a real interest awakened in them. Intelligent Northern soldiers, returning from the South with vivid memories of the singing blacks, set about recording the unusual songs they had heard, and in 1867 the Allen, Ware, and Garrison collection, *Slave Songs of the United States*, made its appearance. In June of the same year Col. Thomas Went-



worth Higginson contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* an informative essay on *Negro Spirituals*, giving the words of numerous songs he had collected among the soldiers of his black regiment. In December, 1868, J. M. Brown contributed to *Lippincott's* an article called *Songs of the Slave*, giving a general analysis of the kinds of song. From this on the serious recording of spirituals has continued, and the songs have come to occupy a prominent place in the catalogue of indigenous folk-song.

II



When considering the nature of the words of many of these spirituals a sympathetic show of indulgence is often necessary. The scholarly critic is apt to pass over them with a smile of amusement, regarding them as childish and silly, the efforts of simple, illiterate minds; but how great is his surprise when he learns that their counterparts are to be found in some of the old camp-meeting hymn manuals, and, silly as they are, that they were sung lustily and with fervent seriousness by white worshipers, and without the aid of gracious dialect, the element which lends such distinctive charm to the

Negro rendition. In a little book called *The Golden Harp*, a collection of camp-meeting hymns selected by G. W. Henry and published in 1854, in a song called *The Gospel Steamer*, are such lines as these:

I step'd on board the steamer
Constructed by the Lord—
Prepared to sail that very day
He spill'd his precious blood.

And again:

I took my gospel telescope
To view the promised land—
On the other side of Jordan
I saw the precious Lamb.

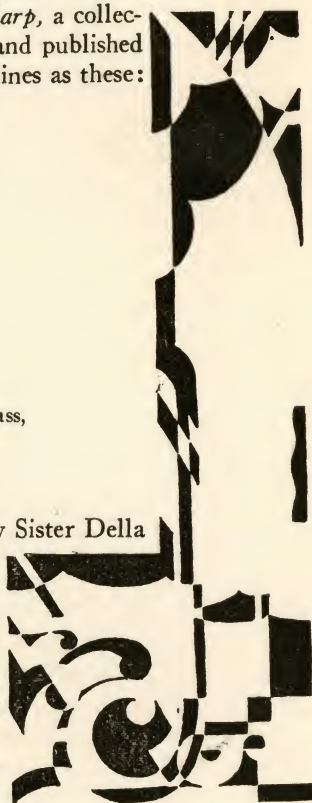
Then ending with:

We'll stand upon the sea of glass,
All mingled too with fire—
And there we'll all shout victory,
And join the heavenly choir.

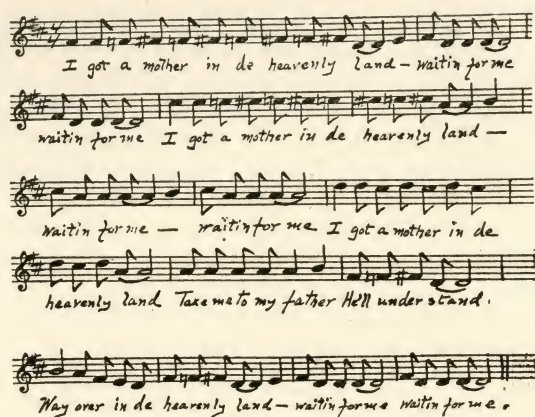
Compare this with a stanza from a song "composed by Sister Della Gardy, Star-Pilgrim B. C. Missionary," which says:

Wen I get up in Heaven
I'm goin' to the sea of glass;
I'll make a little inquisition,
Have I got home at last.

The mental attitude of the respective authors of these lines is essentially the same. Put the first three stanzas into dialect and they would readily pass for a Negro production.



Versions of *The Gospel Ship*, *The Heavenly Railroad*, and the *Old Ship of Zion*, all dear to the Negro ballet-maker's heart and strangely identified with his inventive genius, are also found in the *Golden Harp*. The last-mentioned song is designated a "Negro Hymn," with the statement that it was "altered by John Stamp," a fact which would seem to settle all doubt regarding the original authorship. There is also a large number of songs with the repetitious form of chorus or refrain peculiar to the Negro spirituals. It is difficult to say which of the two singers was the first to use this monotonous form of burden, but upon comparing the spirituals with the hymns in question it will be seen that the untaught Negro has achieved a far more interesting and artistic effect than the educated song-writer has. Where the white singer is content to let an unvarying musical phrase repeat the same line of the refrain with dreary monotony, the Negro sets his repetitious words to bold melodic changes, seeming to vary the sense and feeling and make each repetition carry a new emotion. The following is a good example:



III

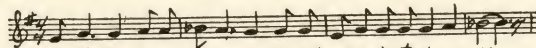
It is quite remarkable that these illiterate singers, devoid of all technical knowledge and training, were able to achieve the very novel and artistic effects which Poe strove to attain in some of his poems, notably *The Raven*, of which he gives an interesting explanation telling how it was evolved. Having lived in Richmond from 1816 until 1833, when he went to live in Baltimore, it is not at all unlikely that much of Poe's inspiration was derived from having heard the Negroes sing their unique songs during his residence in Virginia. Writing of Poe in this connection, Edmund Clarence Stedman says: "I have had a fancy that our Southern poet's ear caught the music of 'Annabel Lee' and 'Eulalie,' if not their special quality, from the plaintive, melodious Negro songs utilized by those early writers of 'minstrelsy' who have been denominated the only composers of a genuine American school." Taking into consideration Poe's extraordinary sensitiveness to tonal beauty, the colorful sound of words, the irresistible lure of music and the rhythm of untrammelled nature, it is reasonable to assume that he must have accumulated some knowledge of plantation life and have had something like a sympathetic understanding of the poetic and musical sensibilities of the Negroes he saw around him.

In his essay called *The Philosophy of Composition*, Poe says: "In carefully thinking over all the usual artistic effects—or more properly *points*, in the theatrical sense—I did not fail to perceive immediately that no one had been so universally employed as that of the *refrain*. . . . I considered it, however, with regard to its susceptibility of improvement, and soon saw it to be in a primitive condition." (What better example could he have had in mind than that of the Negro's song?) . . . "As commonly used, the *refrain*, or burden, not only is limited to lyric verse, but depends for its impression upon the force of monotone—both in sound and thought. . . . I determined to produce continuously novel effects, by the variation of the application of the *refrain*—the *refrain* itself remaining, for the most part, unvaried."


Charles Kingsley's poem, *The Sands of Dee*, is another fine example of the use of cumulative monotone. Like many of the spirituals, it undertakes the telling of no great story, but by slightly varied repetition of certain descriptive lines, a simple dramatic incident is made to assume the aspect of deep tragedy, and the stark dreary grandeur of the event impresses the imagination with a strange reality. What could be more simple, and at the same time more impressive, than the lines:

The creeping tide came up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came pouring down,
The blinding mist came pouring down,
Came down and hid the land—
And never home came she.

With nothing like the scholar's art, but possessed of a native sense of the dramatic, the Negro sings his graphic song of the *Dry Bones*, telling about 'Zekul and what he saw in the valley of the dead men, the element of gruesomeness growing with each succeeding verse of his song, finally ending with the sinister lines:



Some dem bones is my mother's bones Come to-gather for to rise an shine -



Some dem bones is my father's bones - Some o'dem bones is mine

Yes, some dem bones goin' a-make me laugh
Wen dey gather for to rise an' shine;
An' some dem bones goin' a-make me weep,
'Cause some o' dem bones is mine.

However monotonous and uninteresting this repeating of lines may appear to anyone undertaking the study of the spirituals, he will be gratified to know that there is small likelihood of his ever meeting with anything as excessive as the following verse of a "white" hymn, sung to the tune of the *Holy War*:

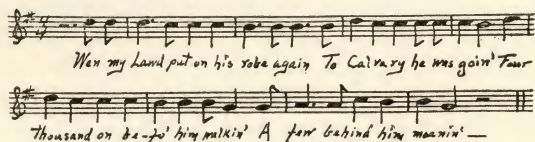
When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down
Beneath God's awful frown,
Christ laid aside his crown
For my soul.

Of course, this is intended in all seriousness, and the intelligent critic who would dare let himself smile when reading it knows full well that he would be solemnly rated for his impiety, whereas he would be permitted to laugh outright at the song of the colored missionary "known as the World's Battle Ax," who tells how

God got angry on his throne,
He called the angels and they began to moan;
They dropped their wings and veiled their face,
And cried, have mercy on the human race.

IV

Another very striking feature of these Negro productions is the ballet-maker's understanding of the economy of words as shown in the verse part of his song when he sets out to tell a story. He has little thought for superfluous detail, but occupies himself only with the essentials; attaining in nearly every instance a result nothing short of amazing. Take for example the following two verses of the spiritual called *Wasn't That Hard Trials*:



O the judgement seats they all filled out,
Come for to judge my Savior;
O the multitude was very great,
Spoke nothin' in his favor.

V

Could any account of the sorrowful happening, however expanded or embroidered, succeed in giving a more appealing and affecting sense of utter desolation, or cause one to feel more poignantly the deep pity of the situation, than the last two lines of each of these verses succeed in doing? The same heroic quality is felt in the spiritual called *He Never Said a Mumblin' Word*, which recounts the passion of the Saviour with majestic restraint, the superb plaintive melody with its reiterated sighing burden of "not a word, not a word, not a word," combining to make it a song of great emotional power.

Song is the life of the Negro's religion and without it his devotions would have little meaning. Singing, he feels, is intended for the worship of God and "the better the voice is, the meeter it is to honor and serve God therewith." Sharing the opinion of John Wesley, perhaps unconsciously, he feels that "singing, to be suitable, must include every variety of manner; slow and solemn, soft and gentle, sweet and warbling, quick and lively, sprightly and energetic, loud and rapid; each in turn and mingled and modified, according to time, place, and occasion"; and anyone attending his church services will soon learn to what a wonderful degree of perfection he has followed the exacting demands of this formula.

NEGRO SPIRITUAL RECORDS*

WERE YOU THERE. One side and STEAL AWAY. One side. Paul Robeson (Bass). One 10-inch disc (V-19742). 75c.

SPIRITUALS: *Ezekiel Saw de Wheel; Swing Low, Sweet Chariot; Keep Yo' Hand on the Plow, Hold On; Good News; Standing in de Need of Prayer; Religion Is a Fortune.* Two sides. Hall Johnson Negro Choir. One 12-inch disc (V-36020). \$1.25.

JOSHUA FIT DE BATTLE OB JERICHO. One side and BYE AND BYE. One side. Paul Robeson (Bass) and Lawrence Brown (Tenor). One 10-inch disc (V-19743). 75c.

WATER BOY. One side and LI'L GAL. (Dunbar-Johnson). One side. Paul Robeson (Bass). One 10-inch disc (V-19824). 75c.

NOBODY KNOWS DE TROUBLE I'VE SEEN. One side and SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT. One side. Paul Robeson (Bass). One 10-inch disc (V-20068). 75c.

GO DOWN MOSES. One side and I WANT TO BE LIKE JESUS. One side. Tuskegee Quartet. One 10-inch disc (V-20518). 75c.

OLD TIME RELIGION. One side and STEAL AWAY TO JESUS. One side. Tuskegee Quartet. One 10-inch disc (V-20519). 75c.

DEEP RIVER. One side and I'M GOIN' TO TELL GOD ALL O' MY TROUBLES. One side. Paul Robeson (Bass). One 10-inch disc (V-20793). 75c.

WHAT A FRIEND. One side and NOTHING BETWEEN. One side. Pace Jubilee Singers. One 10-inch disc (V-21655). 75c.

DO YOU CALL THAT RELIGION? One side and HONEY. One side. Utica Institute Jubilee Singers. One 10-inch disc (V-20506). 75c.

HEAVEN SONG. One side and GOLDEN SLIPPERS. One side. Tuskegee Quartet. One 10-inch disc (V-20843). 75c.

* After hearing some of these records I hesitate to approve or disapprove of the list, my reasons being as follows: I look upon Negro spirituals as serious compositions of a religious nature, and I feel that when they are sung, these facts should not be overlooked. When sung by choirs or quartettes who are more concerned about "harmonizing" and producing effects to impress their audiences than they are about the true nature of the songs, the result is usually characterless and the songs as true expressions of the people are little more than imitations. The same applies to soloists who take liberties with them, trying to "improve" on them, giving them a theatrical element which converts a religious hymn into a vaudeville stunt. Unfortunately, many of these records I heard impressed me that way. When one has listened to the creators of these songs sing them in their churches and while working at the washtub, ironing-board, or when gathered together in their homes for "praise-meeting," the element that thrills and impresses the listener is the compelling sincerity and utter artlessness with which they do them. They need absolutely nothing to improve their native charm. So when one hears them being sung "touched-up" by the singer, with little or no trace of dialect (the language in which they were conceived, born, and cried out), with every "r" rolled with Indianapolis or Pittsburgh precision—one of the absurd habits of Southern Negroes who have "been trained" by a teacher—then they become amusing and the listener must regard them as travesties. Possibly some will think me hypercritical, but such is my feeling in the matter and I am forced to be frank about it.

The few records made by Paul Robeson come nearer to the real thing than any of those on the list which I heard. Beauty of voice is one thing, and interpretation is another. Robeson has both. Most of the singers of the records in question care little or nothing about interpretation.—R. E. K.

HEAR, DE LAM'S A CRYIN'. One side and EZEKIEL SAW DE WHEEL. One side. Paul Robeson (Bass) and Lawrence Brown (Tenor). One 10-inch disc (V-20604). 75c.

CLIMBING UP DE GOLDEN STAIRS. One side and SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT. One side. Kanawha Singers. One 10-inch disc (B-3801). 75c.

DEEP RIVER. One side and I'LL BE READY. One side. Randolph's Kentucky Jubilee Choir. One 10-inch disc (B-4063). 75c.

DE'S BONES GWINE RISE AGAIN. One side and SIX FEET OF EARTH. One side. Frank and James McCravy. One 10-inch disc (B-3778). 75c.

DING DONG BELLS. One side and REIGN, MASSA JESUS, REIGN. One side. Williams' Jubilee Singers. One 10-inch disc (B-7174). 75c.

WALK IN JERUSALEM JUST LIKE JOHN. One side and WHEN THE LOVE COMES TRICKLING DOWN. One side. Williams' Jubilee Singers. One 10-inch disc (B-7211). 75c.

EZEKIEL SAW DE WHEEL. One side and WALK IN JERUSALEM. One side. Collegiate Institute Glee Club. One 10-inch disc (B-3498). 75c.

GIVE ME OLD-TIME RELIGION. One side and I WANT TWO WINGS. One side. Cotton Top Singers. One 10-inch disc (B-7100). 75c.

I'LL BE READY WHEN THE GREAT DAY COMES. One side and DEEP RIVER. One side. Randolph's Choir. One 10-inch disc (B-4063). 75c.

I'M GONNA SHOUT ALL OVER GOD'S HEAB'N. One side and MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME. One side. Randolph's Kentucky Jubilee Choir. One 10-inch disc (B-4285). 75c.

I'M GONNA SHOUT ALL OVER GOD'S HEAB'N. One side and I'M SO GLAD TROUBLE DON'T LAST. One side. West Virginia Collegiate Institute Glee Club. One 10-inch disc (B-3497). 75c.

LET ME RIDE. One side and SEND THE ANGELS DOWN. One side. Golden Leaf Quartet. One 10-inch disc (B-7169). 75c.

LAWDY WON'T YOU COME BY HERE. One side and MY LORD WILL DELIVER ME. One side. Pace Jubilee Singers. One 10-inch disc (B-7009). 75c.

EVERY TIME I FEEL THE SPIRIT. One side and STEAL AWAY TO JESUS. One side. Fisk University Jubilee Singers. One 10-inch disc (C-562D). 75c.

I GOT SHOES. One side and NOBODY KNOWS DE TROUBLE I'VE SEEN. One side. Edna Thomas (Soprano). One 10-inch disc. (C-1863D). 75c.



The Mathematician Looks at Music: II*

By WINTHROP PARKHURST

V

The mathematical aspect of music, as we already have seen, is based upon specific habits of the material universe. These habits are fixed and unalterable, and they show us nature in the role of a stern logician. They reveal a passion for law and order that is arresting enough when regarded in isolation, but fairly startling in its connection with the art of music. One does not ordinarily think of music, an art highly charged with emotion, as a science of scrupulous exactitude. Seemingly nothing is farther removed from the tempestuous and rhapsodic art of tone than that cold realm of pure reason called mathematics.

Nature, however, is never afraid of a mere paradox; and we are thus constantly repeating her epigrams after her, whether we are simply musicians, simply mathematicians, or both together. For, whether we know it or not, our harmonic sense is derived from nature's harmonies, just as our sensual delight in tone-color is gratified by the relative intensity of overtones which form those harmonies. And, whether we know it or not, inflexible order underlies all these sensations. There is an exact mathematical correspondence between the *length* of vibrating bodies, the *frequency* with which those bodies vibrate, and the *pitch* of the musical tones so engendered. This, as we already have seen in part, is that silent music which nature makes and the mind may hearken to.

Our chief concern hereafter will be with the arbitrary man-made scale of equal temperament—an invention dividing the octave into twelve intervals exactly and precisely equal. Philosophic as well as mechanical reasons for this duodecuple division of the octave, yielding the 12-tone chromatic scale we are all familiar with, are well worth the attention of a music-lover. Apart from its theoretical interest, the equally tuned chromatic scale occupies a position in musical history and practice which is occupied by no other device in inventive annals. On the one hand a compromise, on the other hand it is a creative achievement whose fruitfulness has enriched the art beyond estimate. How the octave is so divided, and why the octave is so divided, we shall learn presently. A clear understanding of both points, a permanent blur in the minds of the majority, is the birthright of every person in musicdom.

A clear understanding of certain preliminary matters, however, is indispensable. To these, therefore, we first bend our attention.

VI

Preëminent among these preliminary matters is the general principle on which *all* intervals—not merely the interval of the octave—are divided. We must discover some law, in other words, for adding intervals of any size together and for subtracting intervals of any size from each other, irrespective of both their pitch and magnitude, and without any reference at all to a keyboard.

Now, if we go to the pianoforte keyboard, it is easy enough to see that a perfect fifth (say C-G) added to a perfect fourth (say G-C) makes an octave.

*This is the second, and concluding, instalment of Mr. Parkhurst's article dealing with acoustical laws. The first instalment was published in the October issue.

Similarly, it is easy to see that subtracting the fourth from the octave leaves us a fifth as a remainder. However, we have now left all keyboards behind us; we are moving in a realm of pure logic; we are mathematicians dealing with numbers only. Therefore it is necessary to see whether logical results conform with empirical. Fortunately they do, and that conformity is quickly made evident.

We merely take the ratio expressing the fifth $\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)$ and the ratio expressing the fourth $\left(\frac{4}{3}\right)$, multiply these fractions together, and lo! we at once have the ratio expressing the octave, since $\frac{3}{2} \times \frac{4}{3} = \frac{12}{6} = \frac{2}{1}$, the octave ratio. Any other intervals may be added together in the same manner.

Conversely, if we wish to subtract one interval from another, we divide the larger ratio by the smaller. For example, if we subtract the fourth $\left(\frac{4}{3}\right)$ from the octave $\left(\frac{2}{1}\right)$ we procure the fifth $\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)$ as our remainder, since $\frac{2}{1} \div \frac{4}{3} = \frac{6}{4} = \frac{3}{2}$, our required answer. To take another example, if we add the major third (say C-E) to the minor third (say E-G), we derive the perfect fifth (C-G). The ratio for the major third is $\frac{5}{4}$, and the ratio for the minor third is $\frac{6}{5}$. Our empirical result is thus again confirmed logically, since $\frac{5}{4} \times \frac{6}{5} = \frac{30}{20} = \frac{3}{2}$, our original answer. Remembering that the numerator bears that ratio to the denominator which the vibrations of the upper tone bear to the vibrations of the lower, we hence have a logical instrument that permits us to dispense, not only with keyboards but also with all considerations of actual pitch, inasmuch as an interval is not a *distance* but a proportion, not a mere *difference* between two rates of vibration but a universal law of harmony between numbers. From this it follows that the octave ratio $\frac{2}{1}$ holds true, and may be dealt with exclusively in our calculations, whether the vibrations of the lower tone are 16 and the upper 32, or whether the vibrations of the lower tone are 19, or 47, or any other number that might be mentioned; for in every case the higher tone is exactly double. And, as we have remarked, the same constancy obtains in connection with all intervals, the specific ratio for each interval remaining unchanged by all change of pitches.*

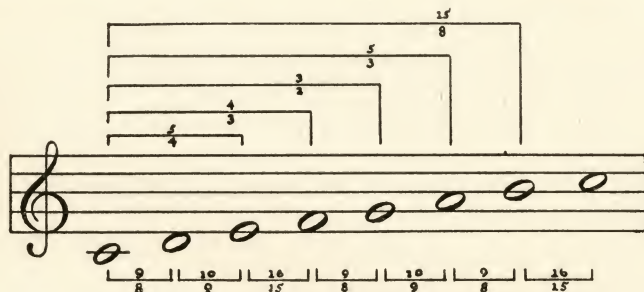
Having viewed the process whereby intervals are manipulated by means of ratios, we are now ready to appreciate the heretofore unfamiliar picture of a musical scale projected, not with musical notes or on a keyboard, but simply as a series of fractions:

$$\frac{9}{8}, \frac{10}{9}, \frac{16}{15}, \frac{9}{8}, \frac{10}{9}, \frac{9}{8}, \frac{16}{15}$$

If the reader is sceptical, let him multiply these fractions together and discover

*The various scientific methods by which the validity of such ratios is established would take us afield of our present study; the reader will, therefore, have to rest content with the assurance that these ratios are adequately established, not only empirically but also by reference to the series of natural overtones or harmonics, the law of which was presented in our first instalment.

for himself that the product is $\frac{18,662,400}{9,331,200}$ or less imposingly, $\frac{2}{1}$, showing that these intervals add up exactly to an octave. We shall see in a moment why the foregoing ratios are modified slightly in the equally tempered scale which we are approaching. But, to the end of perfect clarity, it may be well to pause a moment longer, connecting the series just given with the scale in its more familiar and musical aspect. Here, then, is the major diatonic scale tuned according to the system of just intonation. The successive steps are the series already given; and the intervals between various non-successive degrees of the scale (the scale of C, of course, is selected as a mere convenience) are added simply for fullness of illustration.



Now, what is musically wrong with this picture? The answer is, Nothing and everything. Simply as a scale it is perfect—or almost perfect. Reckoning upward from the first tone, we find that the major third, perfect fourth and fifth, major sixth, and octave are all pure concords. Moreover, reckoning upward from other tones, we find numerous internal intervals that are consonant also. For example, the interval D-G is a perfect fourth, and the interval E-B is a perfect fifth. On the other hand, upon closer inspection, certain undeniable defects come to the surface; for instance, D-F is not a true minor third (since $\frac{10}{9} \times \frac{16}{15} \neq \frac{6}{5}$), and D-A is not a true perfect fifth (since $\frac{10}{9} \times \frac{16}{15} \times \frac{9}{8} \times \frac{10}{9} \neq \frac{3}{2}$).

We thus begin to realize that, even within a so-called perfect system of tuning, it is impossible to effect an arrangement in which *all* the tones make perfect intervals with *all* the others. And, duly sobered by this discovery, we now at last are ready for the grand awakening, namely, the realization that *some sort of compromise is forced upon us willy nilly by nature, as long as we wish harmonic music, and that a compromise is forced upon us not only by nature but by logic also, as long as we wish to avail ourselves of the immense variety afforded by the multiplication of different keys or tonalities.* In other words, harmonized music even within one given purely tuned scale is defective, whilst, as we shall now see, the duplication of such a scale at other pitches (the so-called different scales with different signatures) carries us straightway into the heart of a chromatic bedlam whence we shall find no escape at all, on either logical or mechanical grounds, except by adopting the historic compromise called equal temperament.

VII

It has taken us a long time to reach this point, but, fortunately, the very

length of our journey has prepared us to grasp it quickly and without effort. Indeed, a single illustration, selected from many that might be used, will suffice.

Let us suppose we start tuning upward by major thirds, taking our first tone as C. Then the interval C-E is $\frac{5}{4}$, according to just intonation. Tuning upward another major third, we reach a tone which we shall call G sharp; and tuning up a third from G sharp gives us still another tone which we shall call B sharp. In other words, we now have three major thirds (C-E, E-G sharp, G sharp-B sharp), the sum of which is *less* than an octave (since $\frac{5}{4} \times \frac{5}{4} \times \frac{5}{4} = \frac{125}{64}$).

Now this, manifestly, is very awkward; it means that a keyed instrument must have one key for B sharp and another for C. Worse, it means that if we proceed tuning upward by thirds we accumulate similar embarrassments continually; for a third above B sharp is D double sharp, a tone lower than E is, however little; again, a third above D double sharp is F triple sharp, a tone lower than G sharp is, however little. In fine, as soon as we adopt any given interval as a unit of measurement, we are compelled to specify tones which fail to coincide with tones established by another unit. If we tune upward by fifths, for example, we *very nearly* come back to our original starting point, but the B sharp we reach after twelve such operations (supposing we start with C) is not exactly C, and never can be; nor is it even the B sharp which tuning by thirds would have yielded!

If, then, we stray for a single moment from our original diatonic scale, attempting to duplicate it at other pitches, we are forced to do one of two things: (1) construct a chromatic scale whose elements are literally innumerable (and hence utterly useless to the musician) or (2) limit our chromatic scale arbitrarily. Since the former scale absolutely defies human construction (*i.e.*, is logically impossible to construct as well as mechanically unplayable, supposing that it *could* be constructed), the second solution alone can be considered. And, inasmuch as twelve separate tones are a reasonable number which render an inevitable discrepancy between, say, B flat and A sharp fairly inconspicuous, the sensible course is to be content with such a number. And this is precisely what musicians are content with when they accept the chromatic scale of equal temperament. As a matter of uniform terminology, true enough, they preserve the distinction between B sharp and C natural, B flat and A sharp, and so on; but they do so purely and simply in a verbal manner, for the actual separate tones to which they seemingly refer are completely merged in each other and are thus identical.

VIII

And now, at last, having seen that some compromise is forced upon us, and having agreed to effect this compromise by dividing the octave into twelve intervals all exactly equal, we reach the final point, which is so dividing it. How, by means of ratios, is this accomplished?

Despite all the mystery that hovers over such a process, the duodecuple division of the octave is extremely simple. All we need to do is to discover that fraction which, when multiplied by itself eleven times (*i.e.*, raised to its twelfth

power), yields the fraction $\frac{2}{1}$, or the octave, for such a fraction would represent an interval exactly one-twelfth of an octave, or one degree of the tempered chromatic scale. Multiplying this by itself would give the succeeding step, and each higher degree in turn would be a ratio formed by an additional multiplication. The eleventh multiplication would thus produce the octave. And, since that fraction which alone answers such requirements is the twelfth root of $\frac{2}{1}$ (or, more conveniently stated, the twelfth root of 2), the chromatic tempered semitone is simply $\sqrt[12]{2}$, our final answer. Inasmuch, moreover, as $\sqrt[12]{2} = 1.059463$ correctly to six decimals, and as the note A (A above "middle C") is defined by the American Federation of Musicians as 440 vibrations per second, the whole picture may be presented in a single table:

Note	Ratio (Middle C=1)	Equivalent Ratio (decimals)	Actual vibrations (A=440)
C (B#)	1 : 1	1.000000 : 1	261.6256
C# (Db)	$\sqrt[12]{2} : 1$	1.059463 : 1	277.1826
D	$\sqrt[12]{2^2} : 1$	1.122462 : 1	293.6648
D# (Eb)	$\sqrt[12]{2^3} : 1$	1.189207 : 1	311.1271
E (Fb)	$\sqrt[12]{2^4} : 1$	1.259921 : 1	329.6275
F (E#)	$\sqrt[12]{2^5} : 1$	1.334840 : 1	349.2282
F# (Gb)	$\sqrt[12]{2^6} : 1$	1.414214 : 1	369.9945
G	$\sqrt[12]{2^7} : 1$	1.498307 : 1	391.9953
G# (Ab)	$\sqrt[12]{2^8} : 1$	1.587401 : 1	415.3048
<u>A</u>	$\sqrt[12]{2^9} : 1$	<u>1.681793 : 1</u>	<u>440.0000</u>
A# (Bb)	$\sqrt[12]{2^{10}} : 1$	1.781797 : 1	466.1637
B (Cb)	$\sqrt[12]{2^{11}} : 1$	1.887749 : 1	493.8833
C (B#)	$\sqrt[12]{2^{12}} : 1$	2.000000 : 1	523.2512

This, then, is the whole problem and its whole solution; for, once we have tuned the tones in a single octave, we merely have to double the vibrations of any tone in order to secure the proper pitch of its higher octave, or halve them in order to secure the lower octave.

IX

Two points, by way of concluding these reflections on the mathematical aspect of music, call for a few words of farewell comment.

First, respecting the tempered scale which we have just examined, it is necessary to realize that logical no less than mechanical complications have ordained it. This point calls for the more emphasis in that mechanical complications are often spoken of exclusively. Students are thus led to believe that the tempered scale has been adopted simply because keyboards would otherwise be horribly intricate. The plain fact of the matter is, no keyboard, no matter how many keys it had, would suffice to produce music mathematically in tune, and for the reason (as we have seen) that the chromatic elements of a true scale are literally endless. Sometime, somewhere, we are compelled to call a halt on the incon-

ceivable prodigality of nature, and to accept a compromise. Musicologists are at liberty, of course, to denominate our present compromise a misfortune; they are free to maintain that it is too drastic; they have the right to advocate more generous principles; they may construct keyboards with a score or more of keys to every octave. Nevertheless, though they thus may labor to stave off a compromise, compromise they must eventually for nature makes them.

Secondly and finally, it is worthy of remark that even the man-made scale in equal temperament, though it seems to throw the glove down to nature, is nevertheless shot through and through with mathematics, and in itself is quite as exact as that greater chromatic scale which the cosmos narrates. Obviously, there are audible clashes between pure tuning and equal tuning. The partials of an interval (every interval save the octave) in the one system will come into conflict with the partials in the other system. In other words, audible discord is increased by this invention. On the other hand, however, the incalculable fruitfulness of the very compromise we have examined is bound to transcend the praise of all who hymn it; while, as we have just remarked, its own serenely logical nature is no unworthy mate for the mathematical principle, the incorruptible law of nature's logic, which fecundates the world by means of number. It is on this pervasive and perdurable fact that the mind of the true music lover should dwell if he covets a true understanding of the art of music.

For music is more than a series of aural stimuli. It is more than a spasm of the human heart and of the atmosphere. It is equally an ecstasy of the mind which, though it journey through only a single musical tone or traverse only a single vibrating string, finds reflected therein the procreative passion, and the silent smiling calm, of a logical universe.

(Continued from page 381)

do know from experience, however, that they will play an astonishing number of records without revealing any noticeable signs of deterioration; whether that number falls short of, equals, or surpasses the number claimed by the manufacturers had better be left to those with a passion for counting to calculate.



The His Master's Voice Company proposes to form a Hugo Wolf Society. In order to put the plan into effect, 500 subscribers are needed. The annual subscription, which is 30s., entitles members to an album of six 12-inch records of Wolf songs, together with the original text of the songs and an English version and notes on the music by Ernest Newman. The artist will probably be Elena Gerhardt. Applications to join the Society should be sent to the Secretary, Hugo Wolf Society, the Gramophone Company, Limited, 363, Oxford Street, W.1., London, England. Lack of space forbids further comment, but the venture obviously deserves enthusiastic support.



R. EMMET KENNEDY, who contributes an article on Negro spirituals to this issue, is the author of several books dealing with the subject, among them "Mellows," "More Mellows," "Red Bean Rows," and "Black Cameos."

The "Phonophile"*

By H. T. P.

Munich, September.

Since the habit of superlatives passes for an American infirmity, be it said at the outset that the collector of records, above all others, dwells and assembles them somewhere in Central Europe. To be more definite than the well-worn wartime phrase would breach the confidence he reposes in those whom chance guides to his secret and his solitude. Had he a known address, however obscure and inaccessible, sooner or later other collectors would learn it and flock, in too enthusiastic admiration, to his door. Then there would be an end of the peace and pleasure that his records bring.

And by records—perhaps it is also necessary to say—are meant discs of gramophones upon which music is imprinted and from which it sounds. With him, moreover, music is a comprehensive term. For he now collects not only the recorded symphonies, operas, chamber-pieces and miscellany of established and ranked composers, not only recordings by illustrious conductors, orchestras, singers and virtuosi, but also the dances and the "popular stuff" that pay for these classics. If the modernists are fortunate enough to earn a disc or two, as they do now and then in Europe, he makes speed to possess it. Of late he has gone further afield, setting apart a room and cases for folk-song, for primitive tribal dances, for rites and merry-makings whenever he can find them recorded. Morocco today, Hawaii tomorrow, the Ukraine next week, may all be the object of his quests.

The collector, who is now passing middle years, was born both rich and able. He was schooled to a learned profession, mastered it, gained a measure of note in his practice. He married and sons were born to him. From youth onward he was a studious and unceasing hearer of music; frequented opera houses, concert-halls and studios; became in time a connoisseur with a fine ear and quick mind, though he lacked the skill of hand to be his own musician. Then the war took toll of his life. His sons fell in defense of their country; his wife became a frail woman, died under the privations of blockade. As revolution changed his world, he lost zest for his profession. He had saved enough of his fortune to permit retirement. By inheritance he possessed a country house, remote from town and traffic, a solitude among wooded hills. Thither, with an elderly couple who had long been in his service, he withdrew to lead the life of a recluse among his books and pictures. From his retreat he wrote and published occasional essays about the theories of his profession. Neither the urban pleasures of winter, in which he had long shared, nor wanderings in summer, which he had courted, now lured him.

II

No sooner, however, had he settled into this life than he missed the hearing of music, the more as he could not make it for himself. Like many a frequenter of concert-room and opera house, he had thought contemptuously of the records, indeed had rarely listened to them. For him the conductor and the orchestra, the singer,

* The above article, by H. T. P., music and dramatic editor of the *Boston Evening Transcript*, is reprinted, by special permission, from the *Evening Transcript* for September 15, 1931.

the string quartet, the violinist, in presence weaving such spell as "personality" might spin. An opera was not an opera until sound, action, setting, decoration, were outspread in the theater. Gradually need overcame prejudice. He sent casually for catalogues of records; chose either pieces he had long cherished or recordings that promised well; purchased the best available gramophones.

The music that he so heard first interested him, then pleased him, finally engrossed him. Soon prepossessions yielded, misgivings vanished. He listened to an act of a familiar opera, while from his own imagination he conjured up a scene, personages, action, as they might have risen before the crediting composer. He listened to a symphony and took the pleasure of disembodied sound, unmarred by the mechanism of public music-making. He heard a quartet for strings and no fashionable—and troublesome—audience intruded. He could choose his own programs; according to the instant mood; had only to ask for repetition to receive it.

The recluse had found an absorbing interest to enrich his solitude. Within a year it became the occupation. There were collectors of pictures who ransacked Europe for choice and diversified canvases, or for comprehensive examples of many-sided artists. There were collectors of books whose libraries proved the range and discrimination of their interests and tastes. One took his pleasure in the pictures that hung in his house; another in the books that filled his shelves. He would do likewise by the records. His house was plentiful in spacious rooms. Enough of them could be readily converted into a library of records—cases along the walls, the chosen gramophone set out, chairs and couches for comfortable listening, though nearly always he was the only hearer. Under his guidance, village carpenters worked out in native woods the designs he had drawn. They believed the job no more than a remunerative eccentricity of the hermit in "the castle." Among his pictures were harmonious decorations for the walls. He chose to be his own librarian that he might enjoy every pleasure that cataloguing and the perusal of catalogues might afford; while by this time his ear had become sensitive, his hand expert, in the manipulation of discs and needles.

III

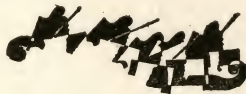
Meanwhile, the assembling of the collection had begun. Every spring and every autumn, the collector forsook his solitude; went the round of the capitals in which he was most likely to find records outspread. He gathered and studied catalogues; inquired, as a connoisseur, about rarities; modestly made considerable purchases; had them sent to his hotel. To those that served him, he was an old fellow from no particular place, who had plenty of money, made a hobby of his gramophone, came 'round once or twice a year, bought according to his liking. When he had gathered his spoils, he returned to his solitude to sort and test them. The process might be delight or pang. Of one disc he had expected much, but the tone was nasal or metallic. On another, conductor or orchestra had blurred the choicest measures. His "catalogue raisonné," as complete as ever, was made of a painter's work, noted every shortcoming. A few recordings of the masterpieces of music, without mechanical flaw and by interpretive genius, were assembled apart, in a room small and choice, like the Salon Carré for the masterpieces of the Louvre. The others to their orderly place in the cases, whence they might or

might not be taken down. And by day and by night the collector listened to his "treasure," as in books and on the stage misers count their gold.

As with most collectors, his ardor increased with acquisition. In his days in the world, of all records he had despised most those designed to provide an accompaniment for dancing. Tangos, blues, fox-trots, he had derided them all—the base mechanisms of a baser music for those too vacant-minded to talk, too dull-tempered even to play at love-making, able only to move four feet—and those not far—upon a square of floor. Once he had made a sardonic sketch of such a couple and set in their coat-of-arms—a cocktail, a cigarette and a disc rampant. Now he persuaded himself that these records had an historical interest and should be added, representatively, to his collection. They embalmed a popular music. They sounded for a phase of twentieth-century civilization. Therefore, he bought and catalogued; not only bought but occasionally listened, fancying that he heard with the mind of a scholar reading an inscription to gain clew to a vanished society . . . Then the third and, for the while, the final stage. A shop from which he had bought much showed him a record of a bolero, not as it sounds in Monsieur Ravel's concert-hall, but as it pierces the smoky semi-darkness of a Spanish tavern or café. He bought it eagerly and asked for more of such folk-music. The shop seeks it for him. These "pieces," as he calls them, round out his museum.

IV

But a museum is not a museum when, so to say, there is no visitor save one, when a single and solitary scholar there pursues researches without fruition except in the paragraphs of a catalogue written in his own hand. This one visitor, this single scholar, is, moreover, an elderly man. He is well-preserved; but in the nature of time his expectation of life cannot be long. Indeed, the few that know his secret and have penetrated his solitude fear that death may steal suddenly upon him; that his collection will pass, in the usual probating course, to his heirs-at-law. These are likely to regard it, outside the dance-records, as so much eccentric rubbish to be disposed of the easiest way for what it may bring. Yet at moments comes a saving thought. Most collectors would perpetuate what they have collected and cherished, would have it their memorial. There were no more inaccessible Shakesperiana—scholars used to complain—than the unmatched collection soon to be housed as public institution in Washington. Likewise, perhaps, with these rooms of records now hidden and almost unknown. To some capital city, possibly to that in which he practiced his profession, the collector may will them; out of his fortune provide the necessary endowment. His passion for secrecy will probably deprive it of his name. Instead, he will ordain over the entrance the word by which he describes himself in his correspondence, usually conducted in French. There he is a "phonophile." Hence a "Musée des Phonophiles."





ORCHESTRA

BEETHOVEN { SYMPHONY NO. 4 in *B Flat Major*. Two sides. Pablo Casals
V-L11600 { Orchestra of Barcelona conducted by Pablo Casals.
One 12-inch long-playing disc. \$3.

Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 10.

V-L7001 { SYMPHONY NO. 5 in *C Minor*. Two sides. Philadelphia
Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski.
One 12-inch long-playing disc. \$4.50.

Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 1.

HAYDN { SYMPHONY NO. 4 in *D Major* ("*Clock*"). Two sides. New
V-L7003 { York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo
Toscanini. One 12-inch long-playing disc. \$4.50.

Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 36.

These program transcriptions, as was observed in the editorial, were not heard under the most favorable of conditions. The new instruments designed to play the long-playing records were not available at the time, so that a makeshift machine had to be used. Now and then the speed of the motor varied considerably, with the usual disastrous results. The pickup, too, was not correctly balanced. Finally, the chromium-orange needles, intended solely for the long-playing record, were not available, and the substitute used was far from satisfactory. It is thus obvious that, in forming an opinion of these records, a great many things had to be taken into account and allowances made for various flaws that no doubt will be absent when the records are played on the proper instruments. There were, however, moments—and occasionally many of them in a row—when the hastily improvised machine worked correctly; and judging from the results then obtained, it seems safe to say that the long-playing records are recorded fully as well as the standard discs. Their other considerable advantages have already been indicated in these columns.

The Casals recording of the Beethoven Fourth Symphony was reviewed on page 213 of the August, 1930, issue of *Disques*, when the work arrived in this country as an importation from Spain. Then the Symphony occupied seven 12-inch sides. Here the work occupies the two sides of a single 12-inch record—a vast improvement, of course, since instead of seven trips from the arm chair to the machine only one is now required. The first two movements are on the first side, and the last two on the reverse. The set has been transcribed very well. It takes careful listening to ascertain where the old record sides ended, and then familiarity with the standard set is often required. Each movement is played continuously, without any uncalled for breaks and pauses. Casals' interpretation is only a fair one, but his orchestra plays competently, and the recording is first-rate.

The Fifth Symphony of Beethoven was reviewed last month. Additional hearings have strengthened this reviewer in his belief that the record is an extraordinarily fine one, beautifully played and superbly recorded. Several correspondents, in the last month or so, have written in to announce that the long-playing record will be a failure because the narrow grooves will not permit the bass to record properly. If any readers are still worrying about this matter, we can do no better than to refer them to the end of the third movement of this recording of the Fifth. They will be agreeably surprised.



There is little to say of the *Clock* Symphony. When Toscanini's recording appeared several years ago, many hailed it as the finest recording achievement in the history of the phonograph. That was perhaps a bit excessive, but at any rate it is a wonderful interpretation and recording. One's pleasure on listening to it again, and this time on two record sides and not, as formerly, on seven, is therefore greatly increased. The movements are distributed as in the Beethoven Fourth. The recording is in no wise inferior to that in the standard set.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| WAGNER
V-L4508 | { | GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG: (a) <i>Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine</i> . (b) <i>Siegfried's Funeral March</i> . Two sides. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. One 10-inch long-playing disc. \$1.75. |
| BIZET
V-L1000 | { | CARMEN <i>Suite</i> . Two sides. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. One 10-inch long-playing disc. \$3. |
| GRIEG
V-L11604 | { | PEER GYNT <i>Suites Nos. 1 and 2</i> . Two sides. Victor Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugène Goossens. One 12-inch long-playing disc. \$3. |

The Coates recordings of the Rhine Journey and the Funeral Music from *Götterdämmerung* were properly famous when they first were issued during the initial year of electrical recording. That was a fairly long time ago, but even so the discs have concealed their age remarkably well, and the Funeral Music, in fact, might be taken for a new recording. The Rhine Journey was a good record, too, but its many merits have been somewhat overshadowed because of the re-recording of the piece that Coates recently made with the London Symphony for H.M.V. It is a really magnificent record, and the fact that Victor overlooked it in making this long-playing disc seems almost incredible. Unfortunately, that is what happened, and the Rhine Journey we hear here is the early one. It occupies one side of the record, the Funeral Music the other; each selection continues to the end without a break, so that the music is rendered doubly impressive.

The *Carmen* Suite was issued several years ago on two 12-inch and one 10-inch records. Here the whole business is put on the two sides of a single 10-inch. Stokowski's brilliant interpretation of Bizet's sparkling music and the glorious reproduction make it an exceptionally attractive record. The long-playing process is useful here mainly because of the convenience to the listener, who has to change record sides only once instead of, as heretofore, six times.



The *Peer Gynt* Suites need little comment. Suite No. 1, formerly on one 12-inch and one 10-inch record, now occupies one side of a 12-inch disc, and Suite No. 2, formerly on two 12-inch records, is similarly spread over the surface of one 12-inch side. Suite No. 1 came out excellently; Suite No. 2 not so well. We should like to hear the latter on a good machine, though, before pronouncing final judgment. Those who still want this music, once so attractive and now a bit shabby, will rejoice over the fact that it may all be had on one disc.

FRANCK

B-90197

to

B-90200

SYMPHONY IN D MINOR. Eight sides. Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Albert Wolff.
Four 12-inch discs in album. Brunswick Set No. 33. \$6.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 482.

C-G67991D

to

C-G67993D

PSYCHE: *Symphonic Poem*. Five sides and
CHORALE from *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue*. (Arr. Pierné)
One side. Colonne Orchestra conducted by Gabriel Pierné.
Three 12-inch discs in album. Columbia Set No. 164. \$4.50.

Sometime ago, reviewing in these columns one of the Lamoureux Orchestra's discs, we expressed the hope that when Polydor decided to do the Franck Symphony the job would be awarded to Albert Wolff. That wish has now been fulfilled, and the records are repressed and issued in this country by Brunswick before they make their appearance in the European supplements. This version makes three electrical sets now available. Victor, with its Philadelphia Orchestra album, was first in the field, and a year or so later Columbia followed with Gaubert's reading. With each of the major companies offering the work played by its most logical band—the recording in all three, moreover, leaves very little to be desired—the work has for the present received about maximum phonographic attention. A magnificent symphony, and one that stands up remarkably well under the cruel test of frequent concert hall performance, it deserves to be in the catalogue of every first-rate recording company; and so few will begrudge the duplication, especially since the three interpretations offer widely different conceptions of the work.

It may be said at once that there is nothing here to put the Gaubert and Stokowski versions out of the running. Both are excellent sets, carefully recorded and competently played. The latter's reading, for some hearers, was marred by the usual Stokowski mannerisms—in this case, excessive lingering over some of Franck's luscious melodies—and so they turned in relief to Gaubert's musicianly and sincere performance.

Wolff's interpretation contains something that both of the previous sets lacked to a degree: plenty of strength. His interpretation is robust and vigorous, commendably straightforward, and in parts full of fire. Franck employs the brass instruments rather generously in the Symphony; in this recording they come out impressively. There is a fine push and sweep in Wolff's reading that keeps interest at fever-heat. The English horn and plucked strings in the second movement are recorded very realistically. The tone of the band as a whole is now and then just a bit coarse; certainly it is not so smooth and silky as that in the Columbia

and Victor versions. On the other hand, the recording is louder and bolder in this set. . . . But these are relatively trivial matters. One could quibble endlessly over various minor differences in the three versions. Luckily—the word is used advisedly—there is no space for that sort of thing here. The important fact is this: that there are three very good sets of the Franck Symphony now available. Personal taste and opinion, in consequence, must figure largely in any estimate of their respective merits; and so the problem of which is the finest recording had better be left to the collector himself to decide. Since all three conductors are thoroughly familiar to most of us, that should be a fairly easy matter to decide. It should be noted that the record sides are well-filled in Wolff's set, so that he gets the work on eight sides, whereas Stokowski and Gaubert took ten and eleven, respectively. Those who own the Stokowski or Gaubert version don't need another Symphony in D Minor; those who haven't will do well to note the substantial saving on the Wolff album.



After serving as fillers for the odd sides of various sets, Franck's *Psyche* Suite at last achieves an almost complete recording, as well as the dignity resulting from being enclosed in an album. The numbers given here are: *Psyche's Sleep*, *Psyche Borne Away by the Zephyrs*, *Psyche and Eros*. The *Love Scene*, *Psyche's Sufferings* and the *Pardon of Psyche* are omitted. Although on a level somewhat below the Symphony in D Minor, the work was well worth recording. It is enjoyable, if not altogether convincing, music. So many recordings of excerpts have been reviewed in these columns that it is scarcely necessary to dwell at any length on the qualities of the music. The performance by the Colonne band is satisfactory, and so is the recording. . . . On the odd side of the set the same orchestra performs Pierné's arrangement of the Chorale from Franck's Prelude, Chorale and Fugue. It is finely played and recorded.

SIBELIUS
V-7412

{ **FINLANDIA: *Tone Poem*.** Two sides. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

This tone poem, next to the *Valse Triste* the most popular and best known of Sibelius' work, has been recorded several times, but not, until now, altogether satisfactorily. The above disc supplies as stirring a recording and performance of the piece as could be desired. From a recording standpoint, indeed, the record is one of the best that we have yet had from the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the recording, it should be remembered, has always been one of the strong points of this band's records. The performance is glowing and colorful, giving at every turn unmistakable evidence of who directed it. Stokowski unleashes the brass section with a bold hand, and the musicians respond nobly, as do the recorders; the result is genuinely impressive. Nor are the other sections of the orchestra neglected; the strings—the 'cellos in particular—and the woodwinds contribute some excellent work. The sharp, cutting outbursts from the brass toward the end of side one are very effectively done, and the nostalgic tune that comes about two-thirds through the piece is movingly played. Those who haven't heard too much of *Finlandia* will find the record an exhilarating one; and maybe, considering the sensational recording and the deft, vigorous performance, those who have had a little too much of the piece will find their interest re-awakened.

**WAGNER**

C-G67994D
and
C-G67995D

DIE MEISTERSINGER: (a) *Prelude to Act 3*; (b) *Entrance of the Apprentices*; (c) *Dance of the Apprentices*; (d) *March of the Corporations*. Four sides. Colonne Orchestra conducted by Gabriel Pierné. Two 12-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

B-90201
and
B-90202

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE: *Prelude and Liebestod*. Four sides. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. Two 12-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 40.

These ever delightful selections from *Die Meistersinger* are too familiar to need any comment here. The moving *Prelude to Act 3*, describing Sachs' attempt to achieve happiness through renunciation, is poetically played. The joyous waltz which serves as the *Dance of the Apprentices* is played a little sluggishly, but the recording is very clear and full, permitting the various instruments to come out with the proper value. The concluding number, the stately march of the guilds, is well-played and recorded. The collector of Wagnerian records will welcome this pair of discs, for the *Meistersinger*, as everyone knows, has thus far been rather shabbily treated by the recording companies.

The *Tristan* records are outstandingly fine ones. They were reviewed from the Polydor pressings on page 304 of the September, 1931, *Disques*.

BERLIOZ

V-11093
to
V-11098

"FANTASTIC" SYMPHONY No. 1 in C Major, Op. 14a. Twelve sides. Symphony Orchestra of Paris conducted by Pierre Monteux. Six 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set M-111. \$9.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 422.

Pierre Monteux's recording of Berlioz's *Fantastic Symphony* was greatly admired when it first appeared last Winter as an importation from France. The lively, zestful interpretation, the deft playing by the Paris Symphony Orchestra, and, above all, the really magnificent recording—these gave the album more than ordinary value. The set was reviewed in detail by Laurence Powell last March (page 23 of the March *Disques*), when the imported pressings arrived. Its addition to the Victor masterpiece albums lends color and a degree of novelty to that series.

BEETHOVEN

C-67987D
and
C-67988D

LEONORE Overture No. 3. Three sides and
RUINS OF ATHENS: *Turkish March*. One side. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 601.

This beautifully produced set of records presents about as fine a rendition of the *Leonore Overture No. 3* as we are likely to receive on records. The set was reviewed from the imported pressings on page 253 of the August issue of *Disques*.

**CHOPIN**

V-EG1838

IMPORTED

TRAUERMARSCH, *from Sonata, Op. 35.* (Arr. Gustav Schmidt) Two sides. Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

Those who want an orchestral version of the Funeral March from Chopin's Sonata for pianoforte, Op. 35, will find this one by Dr. Blech and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra satisfactory in every respect. It is given a dignified interpretation, and the recording is all that could be desired.

HONEGGER

O-238.261

IMPORTED

PRÉLUDE POUR "LA TEMPÊTE": *Symphonic Movement.* Two sides. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Honegger. One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

O-170.143

IMPORTED

PASTORALE D'ÉTÉ: *Symphonic Poem.* Two sides. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Honegger. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

In 1923 Honegger was occupied with the composing of incidental music for Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The *Prélude*, depicting the wreck of Prospero's vessel, lashes itself to a fine frenzy, and one can readily concede that the composer's storm nearly matches in volume that of an authentic storm. Likewise, one can also ask: But what of it? There is a terrific amount of noise, whistling of the wind and rolls of thunder. But it all seems very banal and unnecessary. The recording, though lacking in flexibility, is clear, and the composer, conducting his own music, gives an authoritative and properly vigorous reading.

An earlier work than the *Prélude*, and one written in a far different mood, is the *Pastorale d'Été*, published in 1922; the previous year it won the Verley prize. Completed at Wengen, Switzerland, in 1920, the work is said to have been inspired by a line of Rimbaud's and impressions Honegger gained from nature in Switzerland during a vacation trip in 1920. The following instruments are used: one flute, one oboe, one clarinet, one bassoon, one horn and strings. "The form," says Felix Borowski in his Chicago Symphony Orchestra program books, "is simple. The first section of the piece opens after three introductory measures in the strings with a theme for the horn. Following an *accelerando*, the second division of the work (*Vif et gai*) is presented, its subject being announced by the clarinet. Other wind instruments take it up and the material is worked over. The third section consists of a return to the material of the first, the solo formerly given to the horn now being played by the bassoon." It is agreeable music, and the small orchestra, directed by the composer, plays it effectively. The recording is satisfactory.

THOMAS

C-50304D

MIGNON: *Overture.* Two sides. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Bigot. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

The Overture to *Mignon* is too well known to need comment here. The recording and performance are good, though not outstanding.

**LALO**

V-W1172

and

V-W1173

IMPORTED

NAMOUNA: Suite. Four sides. Société des Concerts du Conservatoire conducted by Piero Coppola.
Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

V-L863

and

V-L864

IMPORTED

LE ROI D'YS: Overture. Three sides and
ANDANTINO: Extrait du Divertissement. One side. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola.
Two 12-inch discs. \$1.75 each.

**LALO
FRANCK**

V-W1177

IMPORTED

SCHERZO. (Lalo) Association des Concerts Padeloup conducted by Rhené-Baton. One side and
PSYCHE: Le Jardin d'Eros. (Franck) One side. Société des Concerts du Conservatoire conducted by Piero Coppola.
One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Considering the many attractive qualities of Lalo's music—qualities that ought to make him a very popular, as well as an enduring, composer—it is strange that he has been more or less overlooked by the phonograph. A few excerpts from the opera *Le Roi d'Ys*, the *Norwegian Rhapsody* and maybe one or two other scattered discs,—and that is about the sum total of Lalo recordings. But the gaps still left in the record repertoire are gradually being adequately filled, and attention has at last been directed toward Lalo. After the comparative neglect that has been accorded the composer, it is pleasant to get, all in one batch, recordings of the Overture to *Le Roi d'Ys*, the orchestral suite *Namouna*, a Scherzo, and an excerpt from *Le Divertissement*.

Victor Antoine Edouard Lalo was born at Lille in 1823 and died in Paris in 1892. Of Spanish descent, his music often reveals Spanish tendency, and no doubt it is that element that gives it its vivid coloring and warmth of feeling. Though not always liked by the general public, his music was highly appreciated by such composers as Debussy, Paul Dukas and Vincent d'Indy. These composers, Henri Prunières, writing in the *Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, tells us, "knew the score of *Namouna* by heart and played it unceasingly. Lalo's influence on these three musicians was very great; he contributed to the harmonies of Debussy and to the orchestration of d'Indy and Dukas."

Namouna, when given as a ballet at the Opéra in 1882, was accorded a rather indifferent reception, but later, performed in the concert hall in the form of an orchestral suite, it achieved a resounding success. It is vivid, glowing music, boldly orchestrated and full of delicate and piquant effects. There is, among other things, a lovely flute solo by Moyse. The performance by Coppola and the orchestra of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire is brisk and smooth; the reproduction is what is to be expected from modern records . . . *Le Roi d'Ys*, produced at the Opéra-Comique in 1888 after many discouraging difficulties, enjoyed the success it abundantly deserved. The richly orchestrated Overture is expressive and melodious. Coppola, working this time with the London Symphony

Orchestra, achieves notable results from the British musicians, and the performance, a well-rounded one, is in all respects satisfactory.



The Andantino from *Le Divertissement*, an orchestral work dating from 1872, is a delicate and wistful little piece, making an attractive filler for the odd side of the Overture. . . . The Scherzo belongs to the year 1884. It is fresh and appealing and full of vigor. The performance by the orchestra of the Association des Concerts Padeloup—often heard on Decca records—is not so smooth as it might be. The conductor, Rhené-Baton, appears apparently for the first time on records. On the reverse side Coppola and the band he usually conducts render a movement from Franck's *Psyche*.

CONCERTO



MOZART

PA-E11122

to

PA-E11124

IMPORTED

CONCERTO NO. 19 in F Major. (K. 459) Six sides. Georges Boskoff (Piano) and Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by G. Cloëz. Three 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Of the twenty-five concertos Mozart wrote for piano and orchestra, only three have thus far been issued by the recording companies: the Concerto in G Major (K. 453), released sometime ago by Columbia in a version played by Ernst von Dohnányi and the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra; the Concerto in D Major (K. 314), put out by Decca a few months back and reviewed in the May issue of *Disques*; and the Concerto in F (K. 459), listed above. Thus the claim that the recording companies have long since covered the entire field of good music suffers yet another serious blow.

One of the less familiar works for piano and orchestra, the Concerto in F for some reason or other doesn't figure very often on symphony programs, and for that reason its appearance on records has an additional value. Belonging to the last group he wrote for his Vienna concerts, it was composed in 1784, and so falls within Mozart's most abundant creative period. The Concerto is in three movements: the first, an Allegro, is sunny and graceful, unmistakably Mozartean; the second, a leisurely and meditative Allegretto, is wonderfully pure in design; and the Finale is marked with a fine vigor and strength. Jahn has pointed out the importance Mozart gave to the orchestra in these works, and this is demonstrated in the Concerto in F, for the orchestral part is extraordinarily rich and full, and parts of it, in fact, recall the symphonies.

The recording, unfortunately, is not altogether successful. It is clear and full, but sounds unpleasantly hard and coarse. The soloist, Georges Boskoff, plays the music in a good, straightforward fashion, and the piano on the whole is satisfactorily recorded, but the orchestra fares less well. But the set has so many other merits that the admirer of Mozart, delighted at receiving a set of records containing music so superlatively admirable and so fresh and unhackneyed, may be willing to overlook such flaws. That is for him to decide.

**VIVALDI**

PA-28.058

and

PA-28.059

IMPORTED

CONCERTO *in A Minor for Violin and Orchestra*. Four sides. Armida Senatra (Violin) with organ and orchestra. Two 10-inch discs. \$1.25 each.

**HANDEL
NADERMANN**

D-M30004

and

D-M30005

IMPORTED

CONCERTO *for Harp and Orchestra*. (Handel) Three sides and

RONDO. (Nadermann-Rosenthal) One side. Lily Laskine (Harp) with orchestra conducted by Manuel Rosenthal. Two 10-inch discs. \$1 each.

Both of these works, neither of which has been recorded before, make valuable additions to the library of recorded music, which somehow still grows in spite of the depression and the much-vaunted radio competition.

Vivaldi was very fond of the violin, and favored it in his composing, for there are said to be at least eighty manuscript concertos in Dresden alone, and his published compositions, a comparatively small portion of his total output, include many works for the instrument. The Concerto given here is typical of Vivaldi, several of whose works have appeared in recorded form in the past year or so, and its naïve simplicity and robust gravity give it a decided charm. Armida Senatra plays the work with vigor, and he is effectively supported by an orchestra and, now and then, an organ. The recording is adequate.

Handel introduced the harp into many of his orchestral scores, and in his oratorio, *Esther*, he employs it with striking effect. This Concerto, which we are unable to find included in any of the available lists of Handel's works, is enjoyable music, excellently played by Lily Laskine. The accompanying orchestra plays well, and the recording is beyond reasonable cavil.

The odd side of the set gives us a Rondo of François Joseph Nadermann (1773-1835), who was born in Paris, the son of a celebrated harp-maker. He became the second greatest harp virtuoso of his time, and composed extensively for the instrument; concertos, quartets, trios, duets, sonatas and solos—all flowed regularly and frequently from his hand. The Rondo, arranged by the conductor of the orchestra which plays in these records, is pleasant enough, and it is well-rendered and recorded.

**RACHMAN-
INOFF**

V-DB1486

to

V-DB1490

IMPORTED

CONCERTO NO. 3 *in D Minor*, Op. 30. Vladimir Horowitz (Piano) and London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. Nine sides and

PRELUDE *in G Minor*, Op. 23, No. 5. One side. Vladimir Horowitz (Piano). Five 12-inch discs in album. \$12.50.

This will be a welcome release to collectors of piano concertos. Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, his Piano Concerto No. 2 and his *Isle of the Dead* (conducted by himself) have already appeared, and now, with the release of this Concerto, his list of recorded works occupies a fairly sizeable space in the catalogues. The set was received too late for review in this issue, but it will be dealt with in the December *Disques*.

CHAMBER MUSIC



MOZART

V-DB1357

and

V-DB1358

IMPORTED

QUARTET No. 2 in *D Minor*. (K. 421) Four sides. Flonzaley Quartet. Two 12-inch discs. \$2.50 each.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 32.

This Quartet, the second of the series dedicated to Haydn as the result of long and earnest toil, was written under particularly trying circumstances; and a story Jahn tells regarding its composition well illustrates Mozart's peculiar powers of concentration. "His wife," Jahn says, "tells us herself how she was confined of her first child while he was composing the second of his quartets, dedicated to Haydn (K. 421). This was in the Summer of 1783, and he sat at work in the same room where she lay; indeed, he generally worked in her room during her frequent illnesses. When she complained of pain, he would come to her to cheer and console, resuming his writing as soon as she was calm. This is a striking proof how unshackled Mozart's ability was by external circumstances; it is not given to many to remain so completely master of their ideas and powers during an event which would naturally appeal to the tenderest feelings of the heart." With which, one feels, none will be disposed to quarrel.

The Quartet in *D Minor*, one of the works Mozart wrote purely for his own pleasure and satisfaction, is sombre and melancholy in character, illuminated only now and then by those sunny flashes of gaiety that make some of his other works so sparkling. The Flonzaley Quartet, available only through records now, gives a memorable performance. The recording is not unworthy of the music or the rendition.

DVORÁK

V-EH647

to

V-EH649

IMPORTED

TRIO IN *E MINOR* ("*Dumky*"), Op. 90. Six sides. Pozniak Trio (Pozniak, Freund and Bernstein). Three 12-inch discs. \$1.75 each.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 332.

The *Dumky* Trio was written in the same congenial surroundings as the Quintet in *A Major*, Op. 81 (released a month or so ago by Columbia): that is, near the town of Příbram in Southern Bohemia, where, in 1884, Dvorák bought himself a small homestead called "Vysoká." The Trio, written in cyclic form, brings together a series of Czech dances, alternately fiery and languishing. It is exhilarating, colorful music, abounding in vitality and pointed rhythms. There is humor, gusto and charm in this work, and the writing exhibits an uncommon skill and familiarity with the three instruments Dvorák employs so felicitously.

Though there are five movements, none of them is very long, and the Trio



is comparatively short. Some idea of the frequently shifting moods of the music may be gained from glancing at the numerous tempo indications of the first movement: *Lento Maetoso*, *Allegro Quasi*, *Doppio Movimento*, *Lento Maetoso*, *Allegro*, *Poco Adagio*, *Vivace non troppo*. And the same process is followed in the other four movements. All this, of course, makes for great variety, and variety commonly precludes any chance of dullness—at least, that is the case in this charming music. Not many readers appeared to share this reviewer's enthusiasm over the recording of the Dvorák Quintet. It is to be hoped that that will not prevent them from listening, if possible, to these engaging tunes. This is the first electrical recording of the *Dumky* Trio. The Pozniak Trio, apparently newcomers to the recording field, give a lively performance, and the recording sets forth their efforts in blameless fashion. Somewhere in the final inch of the last side, however, a faint grunt is audible, evidently from one of the players. Luckily, it is not offensively noticeable.



PIANO

CHOPIN

C-67965D

to

C-67972D

TWENTY-SEVEN ÉTUDES: *Opp. 10 and 25 and "Trois Nouvelles Études."* Sixteen sides. Robert Lortat (Piano).
Eight 12-inch discs in album. Columbia Set No. 163. \$12.

V-7416

NOCTURNE in E Flat Major, Op. 9, No. 2. One side and
MAZURKA in C Sharp Minor, Op. 63, No. 3. One side.
Ignace Jan Paderewski (Piano). One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Here is a Gargantuan feast for the collector of phonograph records of Chopin's music. The Columbia album, which was released last month but did not reach us in time for review in the October issue, includes not only the Twenty-Four Études that comprise *Opp. 10 and 25*, but it also contains the three supplementary studies, not to our knowledge elsewhere recorded. In quantity, then, this album leaves little to be desired. Formerly considered among Chopin's minor works, the three supplementary Études are now held in somewhat higher esteem. They appeared, under the title of *Trois Nouvelles Études*, in 1840, while the studies in *Op. 10* were published in 1833 and those in *Op. 25* in 1837. The actual dates of composition, however, are not definitely known.

The first supplementary study, in F Minor, is built on broad sonorous lines. The second, in A Flat, is more lively. And the third, in D Flat, has a genial swing that is very attractive. They deserved to be recorded, and it was a good idea to include them with the Twenty-Four.

As for the Études in *Opp. 10 and 25*, they are fairly well known. They have retained their freshness and brilliance to a surprising degree. Huneker's term, "titanic experiments," even today is apposite. Though there are passages here and there that seem mostly empty display, depending entirely upon their brilliance

and sparkle for their effect, the sincerity, force and often the genuine beauty of these works cannot be denied. The Twenty-Four have already been recorded by Backhaus (for Victor). So far as interpretation is considered, Backhaus' is somewhat the superior. But his set is several years old, and in consequence lacks the advantages that the later recording gives Lortat's set. Robert Lortat is a Frenchman, and he is not unknown to American collectors, having recorded the Twenty-Four Preludes for Columbia. His work in that album met with some criticism, and much the same faults—i.e., lack of sensitiveness and grace—are to be found in this set. While his playing is not of the kind that compels superlatives, it is nonetheless competent, and the spirited, forthright performances he gives here are well adapted to the vigor and energy of most of these pieces. The recording, though not striking, is well and smoothly done.



The Paderewski record is beautifully recorded, and, like other recent Paderewski releases, is worthy to rank with the best piano reproduction available from phonograph records. While it is unfortunate that such recording was not possible some years ago, when Paderewski was in his prime, it is good that the great Pole's playing—even though, today, it reveals unmistakable indications of the inroads of age—is at last receiving recording that does it at least partial justice. The Nocturne is a rather trivial piece, exuding a pale and rather sickly sentiment, but Paderewski's rendition, though in spots a bit ragged, is by no means maudlin. The Mazurka, however, is delightfully done, and in his performance of it Paderewski exhibits some of the skill that won him such eminence in the world of music.

BEETHOVEN

V-D1874

IMPORTED

{ **ANDANTE FAVORI.** Two sides. Benno Moiseivitch (Piano).
One 12-inch disc. \$2.

The *Andante FAVORI*, though at first intended for the *Waldstein* Sonata, was later replaced by a short Adagio and published separately. "When he composed the well-known *Andante in F*," Grove's says, "he played it to Ries and Krumpholz. It delighted them, and with difficulty they induced him to repeat it. From Beethoven's house Ries went to that of Prince Lichnowsky, and not being able to contain himself played what he could recollect of the new piece, and the Prince being equally delighted, it was repeated and repeated till he too could play a portion of it. The next day the Prince by way of a joke asked Beethoven to hear something which he had been composing, and thereupon played a large portion of his own *Andante*. Beethoven was furious; and the result was that Ries was never again allowed to hear him play in private." The interpretation and recording are both first-rate; the piano tone, in particular, is notable.

WAGNER

B-85005

{ **THE FLYING DUTCHMAN:** *Spinning Song.* (Wagner-Liszt) Two sides. Alexander Brailowsky (Piano).
One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

Several months ago Brailowsky gave us Liszt's piano arrangement of the *Tannhäuser* Overture, and now he follows it up with the Liszt piano version of the *Spinning Song* from *The Flying Dutchman*. It is attractive music, and, in Liszt's transcription, sounds very well as a piano solo. Brailowsky plays it deftly. The recording here and there has a rather hollow ring.



OPERA

VERDI
V-11040
to
V-11054

IL TROVATORE: *Opera in Four Acts*. Thirty sides. Italian Operatic Artists, La Scala Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Carlo Sabajno. Fifteen 12-inch discs in two albums. Victor Set M-106. \$22.50.

THE CAST

Leonora.....	Maria Carena
Azucena.....	Irene Minghini-Cattaneo
Manrico.....	Aureliano Pertile
Conte di Luna.....	Apollo Granforte
Ferrando.....	Bruno Carmassi
Inez.....	Olga de Franco
Ruiz.....	Giordano Callegari
Old Gipsy.....	Antonio Gelli

By this time regular collectors of complete operas have been able to decide whether, as a general rule, they prefer the Columbia or Victor versions of the Italian operas. Substantially the same chorus and orchestra—those of La Scala, Milan—are employed in these recordings, so that the main differences between the two series lie in the conductors, principals and recording. In the case of *Trovatore*, each company's set is uncommonly well-produced and may, in fact, stand as representative of the series as a whole. The Columbia set, reviewed from the imported pressings on page 133 of the May, 1931, issue of *Disques*, was released domestically last month. Now Victor represses its Italian affiliation's version, and with eminently gratifying results. It is doubtful whether two good versions of *Il Trovatore* are badly needed at the moment, but here they are, and it is useless to complain of the duplication.

The Victor set is notable, among other things, for the beauty of the recording. Good recording is nowadays not so startling as it once was. Deluged nearly every month with fine records from the various companies, we have become more or less accustomed to recording that, two or three years ago, would have seemed dazzling. But even today it is seldom that we get a set running to fifteen records that reveals such painstaking care and refinement as are evident in these discs.

Recorded thus competently and sung with more than ordinary skill and taste, Verdi's familiar melodies take on an unexpected power and effectiveness. A good deal has been written about Verdi in the past year or so, and it is therefore fortunate that a substantial portion of his work has been made available on phonograph records. His operas can now be judged solely on their merits as music; and the recordings supply convincing evidence in support of the theory that Verdi, divorced from the stage, still remains an immensely interesting and skilful composer, worthy of the utmost respect. It may be heresy to say it, but it nonetheless seems to this reviewer that first-rate recordings of *Il Trovatore*, like those that are available from either Columbia or Victor, are vastly superior to the per-

formances, even the very good ones, that we are commonly vouchsafed on the operatic stage. Removed from the gaudy trappings of the opera house, the music loses the cheapness that always seems to cling to it in such surroundings, and in place of a somewhat silly and far-fetched opera we have an effective and moving drama set to compelling music.



The singing here is satisfying but not, for the most part, remarkable. Apollo Granforte's Conte di Luna is dramatically and vocally a highly competent piece of work, perhaps, indeed, the high mark of the set. Aureliano Pertile's Manrico is less pleasing vocally, though in his duets with Leonora and the old gipsy he exhibits a not unattractive tenor. Irene Minghini-Cattaneo's conception of the rôle of Azucema is perhaps the most disappointing feature of the set; neither her voice, which frequently sounds unpleasantly strained, nor the way she uses it is very impressive. The Leonora of Maria Carena, on the other hand, is excellent, and her singing is splendid. As usual, the Scala Chorus and Orchestra give magnificent performances, and the excellence of the recording has already been mentioned.

WAGNER
V-8195

DIE MEISTERSINGER: Act 3—(a) *Sieh' Ev'chen! Dächt'ich doch*; (b) *Hat mann mit dem Schuhwerk*. Two sides. Elisabeth Rethberg (Soprano) and Friedrich Schorr (Baritone) with orchestra. One 12-inch disc. \$2.50.

The "footstool duet" is one of the most appealing parts of the *Meistersinger*—the complete recording of which is long over-due, as has been mentioned before in these pages and in all probability will be mentioned again—and a finer rendition of it than this one could not readily be imagined. Recording, singing and orchestra—all are surpassingly fine. The disc was briefly reviewed from the imported pressing on page 422 of the December, 1930, issue.

OFFENBACH
MOZART
C-G4054M

TALES OF HOFMANN: *The Birds in Leafy Bowers*. (Offenbach) One side and
THE MAGIC FLUTE: *Aria of the Queen of the Night*. (Mozart) One side. Lily Pons (Soprano) with orchestra conducted by G. Cloëz. One 10-inch disc. \$1.50.

OFFENBACH
C-G9039M

TALES OF HOFFMANN: (a) *Es war einmal ein Hofe*. (b) *Ha wie in meiner Seele entbrennet*. Two sides. Richard Tauber (Tenor), chorus and orchestra. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Admirers of Lily Pons' voice will find this an excellent disc to add to the two already issued by Victor. The music is fresh and appealing and lends itself admirably to the soprano's agile voice. She sings with great dexterity, and the recording and orchestral accompaniments are satisfactory. The disc is a repressing from French Odeon, and apparently was made before the soprano's triumph with the Metropolitan last Winter. . . . The immensely popular Richard Tauber, assisted in one number by a chorus, gives two selections from Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*, a work which has not yet been sufficiently explored by the recording companies. They are, it is needless to say, beautifully sung. The recording is good.



MOZART
B-90203

COSÌ FAN TUTTE: *Per pietà, ben mio.* Two sides. Felicie Hüni-Mihacsek (Soprano) with orchestra conducted by Joseph Heidenreich. One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

Brunswick in the past year has repressed from the Polydor catalogue a number of notable Mozart recordings; salient among them have been the selections rendered by Felicie Hüni-Mihacsek, the possessor of an uncommonly lovely soprano voice. She knows, moreover, how best to employ it. The rondo she gives here, with its effective orchestral accompaniment of flutes, clarinets, bassoons and horns, is extremely beautiful music. The recording is excellent.



VOCAL

CANTELOUBE
C-50303D

SONGS OF THE AUVERGNE: *Bailèro; Three Borees—L'Aio dè rotso; Ound' onorèn gorda; Obal din lon Limouzi.* (Arr. Canteloube) Two sides. Madeleine Grey (Soprano) with orchestra conducted by Elie Cohen. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

Columbia generally has a record or so well off the beaten path, and this month is no exception. Madeline Grey, who included some of these songs on her American tour last season, is a well-known French folk-song singer, and is said to have made a special study of the folk-songs of the Auvergne section in Western France. These songs, sung in a language that has little in common with the French of the Parisian, were arranged, according to the label, by Jean Canteloube, a native of Languedoc, who is a musicologist and the composer of two operas, *Le Mas* and *Chants d'Auvergne*. Have the above selections any connection with the latter? Perhaps some reader can inform us. At any rate, the arrangements are felicitous, and the orchestral background is a feature of the disc. The songs are alternately lively and melancholy, and they are sung with what seems the proper feeling.

**SCHUMANN
HERRMANN**
C-G9043M

DIE BEIDEN GRENADIERE. (Schumann) One side and
DREI WANDERER. (Herrmann) One side. Richard Tauber (Tenor) with orchestra conducted by Ernst Hauke. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

MEYER
C-G4053M

DAS ZAUBERLIED. One side and
ROKOKO LIEBESLIED. One side. Richard Tauber (Tenor) with orchestra conducted by Frederick Weissmann. One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

The collector of Tauber records has been well-served the past couple of months. In addition to these two discs, another, containing several selections from *Tales of Hoffmann*, will be found reviewed under Opera. The Schumann and Herrmann songs are dramatic, while the two Meyer pieces are more sentimental. Tauber is equally at home in all, and he is assisted in each instance by a good orchestral accompaniment.

CHORAL



MOZART

CH-74

to

CH-79

IMPORTED

REQUIEM MASS. Twelve sides. Richard Mayr (Bass), Hermann Gallos (Tenor), H. Seebach-Ziegler (Soprano), M. Keldorfer-Gehmacher (Soprano); J. von Braun-Fernwald (Contralto), Irma Drummer (Contralto), Salzburg Cathedral Orchestra and Choir. Organist: Joseph Messner. Six 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Miniature Score: Eulenberg No. 954.

CH-80

to

CH-83

IMPORTED

CORONATION MASS. Eight sides. Richard Mayr (Bass), Hermann Gallos (Tenor), H. Seebach-Ziegler (Soprano), M. Keldorfer-Gehmacher (Soprano), J. von Braun-Fernwald (Contralto), Irma Drummer (Contralto), Salzburg Cathedral Orchestra and Choir. Organist: Joseph Messner. Four 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Miniature Score: Philharmonia No. 53.

BACH

V-AB690

to

V-AB692

IMPORTED

CANTATA NO. 4 (*Christ lag in Todesbanden*). Six sides. Orfeo Catalá de Barcelona conducted by Louis Millet. Three 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 1011.

The story of Mozart's Requiem Mass is so familiar that it will suffice to recall briefly the distressing circumstances of its composition and the strange juggling to which it was subsequently subject. In July, 1791, Mozart received a mysterious commission for this work from an unknown patron who later proved to be Count von Walsegg. It developed that this gentleman wished to produce a Mass to the memory of his lately deceased wife and palm it off as his own. Mozart began the Requiem with enthusiasm but was interrupted by some pressing operatic ventures which brought anything but peace of mind to the composer. Despondent, discouraged, and ill, he turned again to the Requiem, but was only permitted to finish the *Introit* and *Kyrie* completely. The several sections of the *Sequence* and *Offertorium* Mozart left at varying stages of composition, dying almost literally with the pen in his hand as he filled in the vocal parts at the words "*homo reus*" in the *Lachrymosa* Chorus of the *Sequence*, to which he had gone back after working on the two sections of the *Offertorium*. Frau Mozart, desiring to supply the Mass complete rather than return the money already paid for it, had one of her husband's pupils named Süssmayer fill in all that was missing of the sketched-out sections and write a *Sanctus*, *Benedictus*, and *Agnus Dei*. This done, Süssmayer completed the Mass by setting the words of the *Communio* to the fugue of the *Introit* and *Kyrie*. Some fifty years later the various manuscripts and documents



RELEASES FOR THE MONTH OF
NOVEMBER

90197 to 90200 incl.	CÉSAR FRANCK—SYMPHONY IN D MINOR Complete on four records LAMOUREUX ORCHESTRA, PARIS ALBERT WOLFF, Conductor	Recorded in Europe PRICE \$6.00 Compl. with album
90201 90202	WAGNER—TRISTAN AND ISOLDE—Prelude Three Parts ISOLDE'S LOVE DEATH—Parts I and II THE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA, BERLIN WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER, Conductor	Recorded in Europe PRICE \$3.00
90203	MOZART—COSI FAN TUTTE—PER PIETA, BEN MIO Parts I and II Soprano Solo in German FELICIE HÜNI-MIHACSEK Orchestral Accompaniment— JOSEPH HEIDENREICH, Conductor	Recorded in Europe PRICE \$1.50
85005	WAGNER—LISZT—SPINNING SONG—Parts I and II From "The Flying Dutchman" Piano Solo, ALEXANDER BRAILOWSKY	Recorded in Europe PRICE \$1.25

Brunswick Records

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connected with the affair were carefully scrutinized and its tangled history unraveled.



Besides being the very last work to come from Mozart's pen, and hence of considerable interest for that reason, the Requiem has transcendent musical beauty. Liturgically it falls without the pale, as do most of the masses by the classical and romantic composers. Its pattern is far more that of the eighteenth century oratorio than of the liturgical mass, except that there is no extended use of solo voices. To be sure, the text of both the Ordinary and the Proper of the Requiem Mass is used in proper sequence, but its musical treatment, with the *Introit* and *Kyrie* coupled, the *Sequence* and *Offertorium* broken up into separate numbers each complete in itself, and the *Communio* joined without pause to the *Agnus Dei*, renders it more suitable for concert than for church use.

The so-called *Coronation Mass*, one of nine by Mozart in the key of C major, is known by the number 317 in Köchel's catalogue, and dates from the year 1779. It was written during the time when Mozart was organist of the Cathedral of Salzburg and Konzertmeister at the court of the Prince-Archbishop. It is No. 1 in Novello's catalogue and is therefore generally known to English-speaking people as Mozart's "First Mass." Mr. Oldman, writing in the new edition of Grove's Dictionary, says that no one seems to know why it is called the *Coronation Mass*. It may have been written in celebration of some local festival.

Singularly fitting it is that these Masses should be recorded by the musical forces of the Cathedral of Salzburg where Mozart was organist, and with which city his name is so closely identified in the eyes of the world. The orchestra and soloists are good, especially the soprano and tenor. At times there is a haziness to the chorus, leaving the listener in doubt as to just what is taking place. There are also a few rough spots, but phrasing and dynamics are excellent.

Sometime during the century preceding the birth of Bach, the cantata form—that is, recitatives interspersed with arias for solo voices sung to instrumental accompaniment, and later with choruses added—evolved in Italy, soon becoming adapted to church use. Introduced into Germany by Hassler and Schütz, the cantata very soon supplanted the unaccompanied motet, so that while Bach wrote some three hundred cantatas, only six authentic motets by him survive.

The cantata was an integral part of the Lutheran service. There was no prescribed text to be set to music, as was the case with the Latin Mass, but there was a prescribed subject. Everything centered around the Gospel for the day, the cantata which followed naturally referring to the Gospel.

Cantata No. 4 (the number refers to the order of publication in the Bachgesellschaft edition) was written for Easter Day, 1724, during Bach's first year at Leipzig. It is a setting of Luther's hymn—*Christ lag in Todesbanden*—in seven stanzas of seven lines each, with an Alleluia. Accordingly there are seven numbers in the Cantata, preceded by a short Sinfonia. Each of the numbers is based on the chorale melody associated with the hymn. The stanzas are treated as follows: 1, Chorus; 2, Duet—sopranos and altos; 3, Choral—tenors; 4, Chorus; 5, Choral—basses; 6, Duet—sopranos and tenors; 7, Choral (simple hymn-like harmonization of the melody).

COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS*

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CÉSAR FRANCK: PSYCHE—SYMPHONIC SUITE FOR ORCHESTRA. Of the many noble works created by Cesar Franck, the symphonic poem *Psyche* may be placed in the first rank. To an old pagan legend, profane in origin, he adapted music that is spiritual, mystical and infinitely charming. From the completed work, which was originally for chorus and orchestra, a suite of four orchestral numbers was later arranged, the three most interesting of which are here given. The music is most characteristic of Franck's latter years and is of that which, in employment of the chromatic figuration typical of the later Franck, unquestionably forecast the impressionistic developments of the modernists, commencing with Debussy.



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César Franck: Psyche—Symphonic Suite for Orchestra. Gabriel Pierné, conducting Orchestra of the Concerts Colonne, Paris. In Five Parts, on Three Twelve-inch Records, \$4.50 with Album.

BACH: SONATA NO. 1, IN G MINOR. The unaccompanied violin is the supreme test of the virtuoso. Szigeti meets this test triumphantly, in one of the memorable recorded performances of recent years. Compton Mackenzie, in an editorial in "The Gramophone", says "I am inclined to call this the best violin record I have ever heard." This Sonata by the greatest of classical masters exhibits Johann Sebastian Bach at the very top of his supreme form.

Bach: Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, for Solo Violin. Joseph Szigeti. In Four Parts, on Two Twelve-inch Records, Nos. 67989-D and 67990-D. Each \$1.50.

BEETHOVEN: LEONORE OVERTURE NO. 3. The struggle of Beethoven to provide an overture for his unique opera *Fidelio* is historic. Four in all were written for the opera under its original name of *Leonore*. Of these, three were discarded but have survived as individual compositions, the overture number three attaining great celebrity. It is here given a magnificent reading by Mengelberg and his renowned orchestra.

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3. In Three Parts—4th side: Beethoven: Ruins of Athens: Turkish March. Willem Mengelberg and Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam. Two Twelve-inch Records, Nos. 67987-D and 67988-D. Each \$2.00.

WAGNER: DIE MEISTERSINGER — EXCERPTS FOR ORCHESTRA. This superb suite presents a number of the most famous portions of Wagner's immortal lyric comedy. There is the beautiful revery of the immortalized cobbler Hans Sachs, the delightful prelude to the third act ushering in the entrance of the apprentices, and the unique, inimitable music of their dance on the greensward, climaxed by the imposing measures of the great march.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger: Reverie of Hans Sachs; Prelude to 3rd Act; Entrance and Dance of the Apprentices; March of the Corporations. Gabriel Pierné, conducting Orchestra of the Concerts Colonne, Paris. In Four Parts, on Two Twelve-inch Records, Nos. G-67994-D† and G-67995-D†. Each \$1.50.



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This Cantata is a most impressive work, giving a magical feeling of variety in spite of the use of the same melody in each of the seven stanzas, and in spite of the fact that every number is in the same key. There are changes of mood from grave to gay to fit the character of the words, and some marvelous contrapuntal outbursts on the Alleluias. As Schweitzer says—"Each verse is as if chiselled in music."



The rendition is fine, barring some shrillness on the part of the sopranos, though it seems strange to hear it sung in Spanish. The recording is good.

HERBERT BOYCE SATCHER

JANNEQUIN
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IMPORTED

LA BATAILLE DE MARIGNAN (*Choeur a cappella*). Two sides. La Chanterie de la Renaissance conducted by Henry Expert. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

BERTRAND
LE JEUNE
C-DFX54
IMPORTED

LAS, JE ME PLAINS: *Sonnet (Choeur a cappella)*. (Anthoine de Bertrand) One side and
LA BELLE ARONDE (*Choeur a cappella*). (Claude Le Jeune) One side. La Chanterie de la Renaissance conducted by Henry Expert. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

B

Cancelled

It is due primarily to the energy, enthusiasm, and singular fitness for his task of one man, M. Henry Expert, that we have, preserved and available for modern use, so many of the lovely sixteenth century French *chansons*. M. Expert is an eminent musicologist, and since 1920 has been senior librarian of the Paris Conservatoire. In 1894 he began the publication (not yet completed) of *Monuments de la Musique Française au Temps de la Renaissance*—a work similar to that being done for the music of the English Renaissance by Canon Fellowes. Not content merely with the publication of this music, M. Expert founded and conducts a choral society, La Chanterie de la Renaissance, for its proper rendition. The three compositions on these records are so rendered, and may be considered typical of the musical art of the French Renaissance.

La Bataille de Marignan is the most famous of four descriptive pieces written by Clément Jannequin, and first published in 1529. Originally called *La Guerre*, it came afterwards to be known by its present title, as it was intended to describe the battle in which Francis I of France gained a notable victory over the Swiss at Marignano, September 13 and 14, 1515. The composition has been tampered with by later hands, but presumably it is here sung in its original four-part version as published by M. Expert. It is vivid, picturesque music, rendered with the utmost clarity. Its extremely intricate and varied rhythms are caught and projected with great realism . . . *Las, Je Me Plains* is a sorrowful, plaintive song, typically polyphonic in character. There are wailing musical figures, and the whole harmonization is cast in a minor mode . . . *La Belle Aronde* has an airy lightness and delicacy of texture.

The recording throughout is beautifully clear, and the records are authoritative and valuable examples in a phonographically little exploited field.

HERBERT BOYCE SATCHER

Recent Victor Releases

MUSICAL MASTERPIECE SERIES

Il Trovatore by Verdi. Performed by soloists, chorus, and orchestra of La Scala, under the direction of Carlo Sabajno, on fifteen 12-inch Victor Records, Nos. 11040-11054 . . . in automatic sequence, Nos. 11055-11069. In Album M-106, with libretto. List price, \$22.50.

The galaxy of stars assembled in the recording of this well-loved opera; the well-trained chorus under Vittore Veneziani; and the scholarly direction of Carlo Sabajno assure a splendid performance. Such names as Apollo Granforte, Aureliano Pertile, Maria Carena, and Irene Minghini-Cattaneo stand for traditional interpretations. Here is La Scala with all its glamor! You will enjoy every minute of the performance with its unrestricted *encore* privileges . . . and want the album in your collection.

Fantastic Symphony by Hector Berlioz. Played by Pierre Monteux and the Symphony Orchestra of Paris on six 12-inch Victor Records, Nos. 11093-11098 . . . in automatic sequence Nos. 11099-11104. Album M-111 with explanatory booklet. List price, \$9.00.

Excerpts from the Berlioz *Fantastic Symphony* . . . that delightfully descriptive work, which was the result of the composer's stormy wooing of Henrietta Smithson, the actress . . . have long been popular on concert programs. No doubt you know the *March to the Scaffold*. Acquaint yourself with the other movements. This album presents the symphony in its entirety . . . interpreted in a manner that is pleasing and authoritative.

RED SEAL RECORDS

Meistersinger—Sieh' Ev'chen! Dacht' ich doch and

Hat man mit dem Schuhwerk (Wagner) Sung by Elisabeth Rethberg and Friedrich Schorr on Victor Record 8195. List price, \$2.50.

Nocturne in E Flat Major Op. 9, No. 2 (Chopin) and

Mazurka in C Sharp Minor Op. 63, No. 3 (Chopin) Played by Ignace Jan Paderewski on Victor Record 7416. List price, \$2.00.

Serenade (Drigo) and

Serenade (Drdla) Played by Mischa Elman with piano accompaniment on Victor Record 1538. List price, \$1.50.

Finlandia (Sibelius) Played by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra on Victor Record 7412. List price, \$2.00.



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SERENADE. (Drdla) One side. Mischa Elman (Violin) with
piano accompaniment by Carroll Hollister.
One 10-inch disc. \$1.50.

The month wouldn't seem complete without at least one disc like this. It is smoothly played and well-recorded.

CORELLI
V-DB1501
IMPORTED

LA FOLIA. Two sides. Yehudi Menuhin (Violin) and Hubert
Giesen (Piano). One 12-inch disc. \$2.50.

La Folia is the finale of Corelli's set of twelve sonatas for solo violin and keyboard, published in 1700 when the composer was forty-seven years old. The air and bass were borrowed, though precisely where they originated is not known. The *folia* is an old Portuguese dance of lively character, and it was Corelli's set of variations that brought it into general prominence. Corelli's work, beginning with a stately Sarabande, soon develops into an impassioned stream of melody. Young Yehudi Menuhin plays it with fervor and skill, and he is ably supported by Hubert Giesen.

BACH
C-67989D
and
C-67990D

SONATA NO. 1 in G Minor. Four sides. Joseph Szigeti (Violin). Two 12-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

It is good that the local Columbia Company is repressing these two discs, because the domestic catalogues haven't a very generous supply of first-rate violin records. These are about as fine as any that have yet been released. They were reviewed from the imported pressings on page 363 of the October *Disques*.

VIOLONCELLO



**BLOCH
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C-2532D

MANSIONS OF ETERNITY. (Adré Bloch) One side and
DANCE OF THE ELVES. (Popper) One side. Maurice
Maréchal (Violoncello) and Maurice Faure (Piano).
One 10-inch disc. 75c.

The music here is of little consequence, but it serves to display Maréchal's talents to good advantage. *Dance of the Elves*, as would be expected, is a light, frolicsome number, done with incredible speed. The recording is excellent.

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CORRESPONDENCE



An Opera Lover Protests

Editor, *Disques*:

Being a lover of the opera in general, I cannot help resenting Mr. G. H. Lloyd's comments on Mr. Brainerd McKee's criticism of a letter recently published in *Disques*, in which Italian opera was rudely belittled. Mr. G. H. Lloyd may believe, if he pleases, that it also grieves me in knowing that he, as a lover of Verdi, Donizetti and Rossini, should find their works so shallow. The wonder to me is how a music enthusiast of his calibre, with his understanding of Wagner scores, should have come to love the works of these amateurish composers. But then Mr. Lloyd might have heard the operas of the above-mentioned composers before he learned of Wagner.

However, in regards to Verdi, it is a well known fact that some critics and students of music, as well as Mr. Lloyd, have accused Verdi, after the composing of *Aida*, of being influenced by Wagner. Still there is an equal number of musical intellects who disagree with these theories.

I am sure Verdi did not borrow from any composer; and much less from Wagner, in whose works Verdi found little to his liking, though perhaps admiring his skill in orchestration. To him some of Wagner's operas must have been ugly and too ponderous. And as a matter of fact, Verdi alone among all his contemporaries in Italy disapproved and withstood this musical Wagnerism onslaught at the time.

Whatever Verdi might have absorbed from the old masters, from Rossini or Bellini, he might show in his early operas, or whatever hints there are in his orchestration of the musical genius of Berlioz—whom in this field Verdi considered more advanced than Wagner—Verdi made it essentially his own and stamped it with his own originality. It would be ridiculous to accuse Beethoven of being Italianish in his scores. Mozart learned much from the Italian school of composition, and in turn Beethoven was much influenced by Mozart. Of course there are those who will argue this point.

If I may remind Mr. G. H. Lloyd, Mr. Brainerd McKee states very clearly in his letter to *Disques* that surely there is room

in the musical world for different kinds of operas, each great in its class. Surely, Mr. Lloyd, this statement from Mr. McKee's pen could hardly make anyone believe that he would break into smiles of delight in the knowledge that Wagner operas are on the decline.

I, sincerely speaking, admire and love the operas of Richard Wagner, that genius of Bayreuth, and care little whether Verdi, Rossini, or Donizetti were greater, or care even less if Wagner was the best man. To me they were all giants, musical giants, even to Rossini with his marvelous simplicity of orchestration, for perhaps his very genius lies in this very simplicity.

THOMAS FALCONE
New York, N. Y.

Radio and the Phonograph

Editor, *Disques*:

May I commend to the earnest consideration of the managements of the recording companies the advisability of taking the initiative in organizing opinion among manufacturers of radio-phonograph combinations and phonograph records to the end that the Federal Radio Commission may be approached with the substantial influence of a concerted demand for relief from a certain regulation which is notable for its lack of foresight, if not for its actual invidiousness? I refer to the regulation which requires broadcasting stations to differentiate between "electrical transcriptions" and ordinary commercial phonograph records. Those who manufacture commercial phonograph records and hope to profit by the sale of them are particularly affected by the ruling of the Commission which requires every rendition of such records to be preceded by an announcement identifying them as "phonograph records." Those who manufacture radio-phonographs or equipment used in the electrical reproduction of records in the home are substantially affected by this regulation, too.

Aside from the ignorant prejudice against phonograph records engendered by a current erroneous belief on the part of the public at large that they are a thing of the past, there is a peculiar psychological reaction on the part of the average listener which is detrimental to his appreciation of a recorded program, whether it be from ordinary, commer-

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10TH AND WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA, PA., U. S. A.

Correspondence (Continued)

cial phonograph records, or from those records which are physically and technically the same thing, but which have been euphemistically cloaked with the appellation, "electrical transcriptions." Experience goes to show that the listener can enjoy almost any program provided he does not know beforehand that he is listening to recordings. If he discovers that he is about to be entertained from records, he usually detunes. Recalling the wide popularity of the "Don Amaizo," "Dixie Shoe Steppers," and "Seiberling Singers and Singing Violins" programs, which in their day were not announced as records,—recalling that the Columbia Phonograph Company succeeded in broadcasting change-overs from actual studio performances by individual artists or bands to reproductions of the same artists or bands as recorded on Columbia records, and back again, with almost nobody in the radio audience being able to discern which performance was actual and which was from the records,—there is no conclusion possible other than that, as far as the public at large is concerned, the difference between average studio performances and good record reproduction is almost altogether illusory.

Nevertheless, the condition exists, and it will continue to prevail just as long as recorded programs must be identified as such in advance, and, as is the case with programs sponsored by the less favored institutions, between renditions as well. Its effect is to stop the ears of those who would constitute a new market for the fine records that are now available. The requirement serves to prevent the public at large from discovering how surprisingly close to perfection modern recordings may be brought. To the extent that the regulation under discussion conduces to a continuance and intensification into antipathy, of public apathy, it damages the record business. The manufacturers owe it to themselves to demand a modification of the regulation. Still, they must receive credit for their records. They should see to it that, unless the broadcaster himself chooses to make frequent announcements that he is diffusing recorded music, no identification of records as such should be required oftener than once; at the conclusion of each program unit, or, when a program is extemporaneous, once every thirty minutes.

The existing regulation has been alleged to have been due to arbitrariness, prejudice and subservieny. There can be very little truth

in such expressions. It is more than likely that a substantial practise of misrepresentation on the part of many radio broadcasting stations provoked the requirement.

Not only the companies' immediate success, but their hope of continuance demands their ceaselessly vigilant aggressiveness. They must force "education" upon the public, and must protect their right to do so. It is not enough merely to state that a straight radio or a straight phonograph is only half a machine. They must prove it by both word and demonstration. They must avail themselves of every agency, governmental and commercial, that will effectuate their objects.

ALBERT J. FRANCK

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A Suggestion

Editor, *Disques*:

With the advent of the program transcription, it is doubtless a fact that manufacturers, dealers, reviewers and collectors have each acquired a brand new set of problems. As collector, I have enough faith in the new transcriptions, so that the bugbear of the business man—sales resistance—will arise strongly in my case while considering an album set of short-playing records as against one of the new program transcriptions. However, I don't intend necessarily to condemn all short-playing sets, because there are now available many such sets which contain very desirable selections played without objectionable breaks, and doubtless more of such will be published during the period of transition.

I am moved to write this in considering Strawinsky's *Symphonie de Psaumes* reviewed in the October *Disques*. Probably this work will become available in the course of time on a long-playing record and it might be desirable for me to wait for that event. However, I am just now interested in the recording under review provided the records do not contain any irritating breaks. I am wondering, then, if your reviews could cover this question of breaks. I am certain that collectors will become more and more "break-minded" as the number of long-playing records increases and in your reviews a mention of the breaks will doubtless be generally welcome.

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BOOKS

GEORGE GERSHWIN: *A Study in American Music*. By Isaac Goldberg. New York: Simon and Schuster. \$3.50.

In his "Tin Pan Alley," published last year, Dr. Goldberg outlined in some detail the gaudy history of the American popular music business, and so prepared the way for this volume on George Gershwin. Since the subject is an extremely lively one, it is eminently fitting and proper that the book should be written with considerable gusto. The style employed, departing widely from that usually adopted for learned treatises on the more decorous composers, leaps and bounds with as much energy as the *American in Paris*. A book on Gershwin has been needed, and few could have written it as skilfully and satisfactorily as Dr. Goldberg.

The book is not, the author explains in his Preface, a biography. "To call by the name biography a book about such a youth would be, to say the least, premature. Rather does this volume aspire to present a record of fact, a digest of opinion, and incidentally, an attempt at a general evaluation. The first account of an active, living figure should share something of the fragmentariness and the incompleteness of its subject; it should set down that sort of data, even trivialities, that otherwise might be quickly lost to the eventual biographer. It should be, insofar as it may be, a source book, fully documented. Least of all should it pretend to be definitive."

Such, in its bare essentials, was Dr. Goldberg's plan. With a figure like Gershwin, it works out very well. The book, regardless of its other qualities, is immensely interesting. Gershwin emerges from its pages a singularly attractive and unaffected young man. Rising with extraordinary rapidity from a \$15 a week job as a song-plugger at Remick's to become a widely esteemed composer of musical comedies and symphonic scores, he has had an exceptionally colorful and vivid career—a career, moreover, that in Dr. Goldberg's opinion is in reality just beginning. Gershwin's most important work is still in front of him. His head humming with melodies that not only will have excellent chances to sell well but will also stand likely to give the critics pause, the composer yet remains

unsatisfied. Frankly enjoying his fame, in excellent health, and never cursed with introspection, he nonetheless is not contented. His dissatisfaction, however, does not proceed from bewilderment and impotence; he appears to have a very clear idea of the course he should follow, and apparently nothing will induce him to depart from it. "I know what I want, and I'm on my way," he is quoted as saying. It is this discontent, combined with his sense of self-criticism and his abundant natural talents, that may eventually lead him to far greater things than those he has already achieved.

The story of his life and the various steps by which he progressed to his present eminence are related with admirable care. Considerable space is devoted to the descriptions of the first performances of the *Rhapsody in Blue*, Concerto in F and *American in Paris*, and the critical reaction to these works is presented with commendable impartiality. Gershwin has recently completed a *Second Rhapsody*, and Dr. Goldberg's account of the first rehearsal of the work will be of interest to record collectors. "As in the case of his Concerto, so for a trial hearing of the *Second Rhapsody* Gershwin hired an orchestra that, on Friday, June 26, 1931, went through the freshly completed score in one of the studios of the National Broadcasting Company. As these studios have a wire connection with the Victor recording laboratories in Camden, a special record was made of the rehearsal. Here, indeed, is an improvement upon the rehearsal idea; the composer may listen over and over again, studying effects, comparing notes, and basing his revisions upon repeated performances."

Dr. Goldberg's criticism of the music, though friendly, is to the point, and when the composer fumbles, as he frequently does, the slip is vigorously indicated. An interesting chapter is devoted to the composer's brother, Ira, who writes the lyrics to George's music. The book is lavishly illustrated with photographs, pencil drawings by Gershwin, and musical quotations. There is an excellent index. Gershwin's eventual biographer, writing of this period of the composer's life, will find all necessary information in this volume. Part of his task, in consequence, will be very pleasant.

